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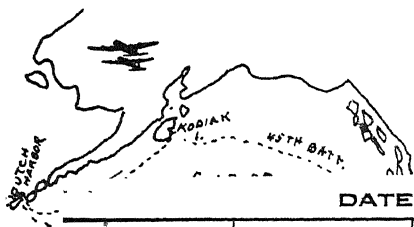
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READY ON THE RIGHT



*A True Story of a Naturalist-Seabee on the Islands of
Kodiak, Unalaska, Adak, Tanaga, Oahu, Eniwetok,
Guam, MogMog (Ulithi) and Okinawa.*

By
RALPH J. DONAHUE

Illustrated

Smith Printing Company, Publishers
Kansas City

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To all men of the Seabees who, by the sacrifice
of time, skill and life, made Victory possible, this
book is respectfully dedicated.

FOREWORD

In setting down the various incidents that took place in the 27th and 45th Naval Construction Battalions, while my name was on the muster of these two organizations, I claim no literary ability or excellence. I claim, however, a sincerity of purpose and an honest effort to portray Seabee life in the field as it is actually lived.

In the main, this happens to be an enlisted man's story of enlisted men's adventures and experiences. There were officers along, of course, but, due to Naval Regulation and the maintenance of Discipline, which demanded an unnatural barrier be established between officers and men, I can truthfully say I became acquainted with but three officers, out of the fifty or so who served with the two battalions. And, since I am writing only of what I know, naturally my story chiefly concerns the actions of men who wore either the Chief's cap or the enlisted man's white hat.

I confess to a considerable feeling of pleasure, as I dug through the war year records, in re-living the immediate Past. I enjoyed renewing acquaintance of those men with whom I had traveled, worked, or "sweated out" the arrival of the home bound ships.

But, by the same token, I was appalled at the number of men whose names and deeds already were fast slipping into the limbo of Things Forgotten. Not only this, but in assembling current data, I was grieved to learn that some men, since their return to Civilian life, had departed this shore to stand Final Muster Orders. Two among these, whose recent passing has been reported to me by their widows, are Merle G. Leonard, of Humbolt, Kansas, and Paul L. Dorsey, of Des Moines, Iowa.

Being a naturalist, of sorts, and interested in animate creation, be it bee or bug or bird, I have, without doubt, pressed heavily on the side of Nature. But I think I will be pardoned in this, for it all was a part of the scene. Surely the references to Tanaga

would not be complete without mention of the acrobatic ravens and tame foxes so common there. Nor could I mention Ulithi's MogMog without reference to the snowy white love terns that played in the banyans on the coral atoll.

And in this connection, I should not fail to credit Dr. William Beebe, Director of Tropical Research of the New York Zoological Society, for his unstinted help in identifying the various birds and animals I met in the Aleutians. And credit also must be given to Dr. Ernst Mayr, of the New York Natural History Museum, and Drs. A. Wetmore, Doris M. Cochran, J. E. Graf, Edward A. Chapin, and others of the United States National Museum, Washington, D. C., for their kindly and patient help and encouragement in my study and collection of sea shells, reptiles, plant seeds and insects of Okinawa and Guam. Their interest and letters helped to shorten the weeks of warring, and, I am forced to admit, at times seemed to give point to an otherwise pointless expedition!

In gathering information and data for this writing, I want to thank Herman Mertens, of Omaha, Nebraska, Walter E. Salmon, of Chicago, E. R. Sprague, of Nutley, N. J., George T. Williams, of Waco, Texas, Stanley Sydor, of Providence, R. I., David Worsfold, of Los Angeles, Calif., Q. A. Schreckengast, of Houston, Texas, George Bisenius, of Hollywood, Calif., and Ted Elam, of Neodesha, Kansas.

If this book preserves the deeds and name of even one man who served in the Seabees of the United States Navy I shall not consider my efforts in vain. And if the reader finds even a small bit of interest and comfort among these pages, I shall say, "It was worth it."

R. J. D.

Kansas City, Mo.
July 17 1946

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All pictures shown are Official U. S. Navy Photos except "Kash and Schreck Before Native Tomb" and "The Author at Kodiak."

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Chapter 1.

BIRTH OF THE "BEES"



WHEN THE JAPS RAIDED Pearl Harbor, the explosion of their bombs did other things beside sink a harbor full of ships and slaughter hundreds of our best men. For one thing, they shook the country out of its cocky complacency, and revealed that, in the changing world, our Navy, as great as it was, could not be run on tradition alone. Because John Paul Jones won battles with ships of his time, and numerous other sea contests had been credited to us between then and the time Admiral Dewey spanked the pants off the Spanish in Santiago Bay, we had foisted on our minds the idea that our Navy was invincible. We believed its mere presence was enough to frighten away any enemy in the world.

Did we not expand our chests and flex our muscles in widely publicized maneuvers on both oceans? Did we not devise such workable plan of attack on Hawaii that the Japs used it with great success that fateful morning of December 7? Didn't we have the "spit and polish" so necessary for battle winning *esprit de corps*? Why, we had Shore Patrolmen scattered up and down both coasts and in the most of the larger cities, one of the duties of which was to see that no gob wore his hat on the back of his head, or went around with his hands in his pockets: (What pockets?) Yet, despite all this puff and blow the Japs dared to come thousands of miles and blast us. Yes, there were things to learn, and we learned them the hard way!

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One of the first items on the course of Battle Procedure was the absolute need of bases, docks, ship repair stations, and gun emplacements. Such items had to be constructed in advance of the main operation, often at the very front lines. The Army had its Engineers, but the Navy had no such organization. Heretofore most of this work had been done by civilian labor, but in actual warfare the set up was far from ideal.

In the first place, civilian workers on island bases, no matter how skillful they were with the saw, hammer and wrench, usually lacked the required military training necessary to protect themselves, if need be, from an invading enemy. Then too, due to the "rules of civilized warfare" such men, since they were not in uniform, were denied the "protection" afforded the captured soldier, sailor or marine.

To fill the need for skilled workmen, a drastic step was taken. In the face of tradition that men should come into the Navy first as Apprentice Seamen and, after due time, work their way up, grade by grade, it was decided to form Construction Battalions, and admit men into them with ratings approximating, and with consideration for, their years of skilled labor outside.

So, in the fires of war and the mold of urgent need, the Seabees were born. (The name being derived from the initial letters of the branch of "Naval Engineers" known as "Construction Battalions," a not inappropriate appellation, for in the course of the following three year's activity, not infrequently the "bees" had to use their "stings" to help defend that which they had built.)

The response to the call for Seabee volunteers was something at which to marvel. Many of the men who answered were out of the draft's reach, not a few had served in World War I, and a greater number had families depending on their incomes for a livelihood. Nevertheless, they turned their backs on boosted wartime wages, and the comparative comfort of their

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homes, to offer themselves and their lives that this war could be fought to a victorious finish.

There has been a lot of hokum written about the men who make up the Seabees. In an effort to portray the individuals as hardy adventurers and fighters, who itched for blood and battle, some writers have left the impression that the Construction Battalions were composed of half human crosses between braggarts and gorillas. Disdainful of any liquid so pallid as water, these writers would have us believe their roisterers were not content unless drunk on "torpedo juice" or, at least, "raisin jack." Nor satisfied with a mere 20 hour day of the most arduous labor, the Seabees, instead of resting, preferred to trail blood-sucking Japs the remainder of the night, often with no other idea in mind than a chance to spit a certain brand of snuff into slanted eyes of the enemy!

The true, unvarnished Saga of the Construction Battalions requires no such embellishments. The chronicle of projects completed, and objectives attained, is interesting enough with but factual recording. And the knowledge that a large majority of battalion personnel were family men, with a mature sense of fidelity and duty to home and loved ones, detracts nothing from the story of the "Navy Engineers."

Admittedly, there were certain individuals who spent a good portion of their time in either searching for the ingredients of the stuff they brewed, or, after they found them, lying in stupor from its swallowed effects. Also there were a few men who seemed, for one reason or another, to have lost respect for womanhood. And it must be admitted there were those whose fingers possessed adhesive qualities peculiarly attracted to gear belonging to mates. But who would brand the entire service because of the actions of a thoughtless minority?

The writer believes, in so far as personal experience with the individual Seabees, and especially the enlisted men, that he is qualified to write, as he has written, in refuting the gore-loving, die-hard, what-the-hell impression left by earlier writers of the

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working-fighter's adventures. In the first place he, for three years, was an enlisted Seabee himself. Nor was his knowledge confined to a single battalion. After 16 months with the 45th NCB, in Alaska and the Aleutians, he was transferred, at its de-commission, into the fighting 6th, just returned to the states after 2 years in the heat and jungles of Guadalcanal.

Still later as a member of the 27th, he went to Okinawa, during the closing months of the war with Japan. And while awaiting placement, in Camp Parks Transit Training Units, he became acquainted with yet other groups of men, groups that, for physical defects, or otherwise, were detained in camp under conditions that brought out the worst in them.

Added to this was the writer's experience as a censor of outgoing mail for the 45th Battalion and, while a member of the 27th, he had charge of the enlisted man's mail censorship. In this capacity, as a reader of personal messages, he had a view of the "inner man" normally withheld from the officers and enlisted personnel. Quite often, he found the rough appearing sailor to be only putting on a show because he thought it was expected of him. Taken away from his imagined "audience," he was an entirely different person.

By and large, the writer found the men of the Naval Construction Units to be honorable men. They had enlisted for various reasons, but in the main it was due to their desire to get the war won and over with as soon as possible so they could return to their loved ones and homes before their children grew up strangers.

Chapter 2.

TWICE IN MY GENERATION

ONE WAR IN THE AVERAGE man's life time is usually enough! Though I served with the 337 Aero Squadron, 1918, in England, during World War I, and thought, when I was discharged, that I would never do the trick again, I reckoned not on the course of events. In the quarter of a century that followed the Armistice, I married, raised a family, and planned a quiet evening of life. Military roles, never close to my heart, were as far from my aspirations as the sun is from the earth. But the Nazis and Nips, by their rekindling of the conflagration, put the country into war again, and everything seemed to point me back into uniform.

My brother, Harold, also a veteran of the first world war, soon reenlisted. My son, still in college, but already in Army Reserve as a Second Lieutenant, was to go into active duty upon his graduation. My daughter's husband was already in the army, and both she and her mother had found themselves defense jobs. There was nothing left for me to do but get into the fight. And that I did!

Truth forces me to admit there were yet other reasons than 100% proof patriotism that made me exchange my civilian garments for GI cloth. One of these was my desire to travel into strange and far off lands. I thought if I could do my bit while I was traveling, I'd be killing two birds (Japs?) at once! Then, too, there may have been a sprinkling of desire to convince my wife that I was still young enough to be accepted into the armed forces. But whatever the motivation, I put my house in order, so to speak, which, in my case, was to find a renter for the

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homestead, get the little woman an apartment near her work, close up what business I had, pay what debts I could, bid my friends goodbye, and seek a recruiting office.

It was not all as easy as it sounds, for my age was "44 going on 45," and the army, to which I first applied for admission, said I was too old except for some special skills, none of which I had even a fragment of knowledge. Feeling somewhat rebuffed, and beginning to be afraid the words of my wife were coming true—that I had seen to many winters—I hiked over to the office of the Coast Guard.

Yes, the Guard would take me if I could pass its physical requirements. But I would have to start with the rate of Apprentice Seaman at fifty dollars per month. Recalling that I had heard about the Navy giving skilled mechanics ratings corresponding to their civilian abilities, I decided to investigate before committing myself. I promised I would go back to the Guard if I found nothing better.

But I did not go back. The Navy's nautical counterpart of the Army Engineers proved to be what I was looking for. And though faced with painter rates frozen, for the time being, at 3rd class, the pay was \$76.00 per month, an advancement over the Coastmen of \$26.00, I, promptly and without question, accepted the proposition, and plowed through the miles of red tape to enlist.

Had I possessed, at the start, the knowledge of Navy advancement procedure that was mine even at the end of the first year, I would have "bargained" for a higher rating at the start, or remained a civilian, as some did, until such advanced rates were open. But a fellow has to learn, and often such schooling is obtained through hard experience.

From the date of being sworn in until I was called to active duty, an even sixty days elapsed. But, finally, there appeared in my postoffice box, a long envelope from the Navy, informing me that I was to report to the recruiting office two mornings later.

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Late on the night designated, after considerable waiting in the union station, I, along with several score men from the Kansas City region in charge of C. R. Box, a veteran of World War I, began the trip to Camp Allen, Norfolk, Virginia. With me in the troop sleeper were men with whom I was to serve during sixteen long months in Alaska and the Aleutians. Sam Logan, being the first man I became acquainted with in the Navy, having met him in the first lineup before being sworn in, remained a steadfast friend through it all.

Kenneth Q. Lindsey, was also a passenger on the sleeper. He took it upon himself, by displaying a large map, to keep us posted as to our geographical whereabouts throughout the trip. Nicholas Roundtree was another with whom my trail crossed and re-crossed. The last time I saw him was on Okinawa during the battle to wrest that island from the Japs. It is remenisced he, because of his witticisms, usually had the crowd about him in an uproar.

November 5, 1942, was the date set for the gathering together of the body of men who eventually formed the 45th Battalion of Seabees. But, for reasons unknown to its membership, the group was first given the name and number "New 49th." By the time, however, our home folk had received notification of this address, the number was changed to 45th, a number it bore through shipwreck, williwaws, and eternity of fog and snow.

There is something about the first weeks in the Navy that makes every seaman, petty officer and officer, look back upon it with apprehension, and distaste. "Boot Camp," as it is called, is nothing pleasurable to think about.

There may be some pychological reason for keeping the new recruits behind strong woven wire fences, or for marching the men every where they go, even to church and chow. There may be benefit in the so called, "boot haircut," that each recruit gets sometime during his first week in camp. (A haircut resulting from two or more barbers vieing with each other's

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clippers on the same head (!) to cut the greatest swath in a given time.) There may be educational reasons for "old-timers" in the service to browbeat, by word and ridicule, every mother's son who submits himself to service in the Navy. But, if there be anything of value in the way "boots" are trained, I failed to notice it during my weeks of its classic "indoctrination."

The embryonic 45th Battalion was housed in Barrack No. 43, at Camp Allen. There, within the fenced enclosure, with guards at the gates, and every movement regulated, we were instructed in the living of the life that was to be ours for the next three years. Chief Cendo, it is recalled, had charge of my immediate platoon, with George O. Hedge as Master At Arms.

Those who permit recollection of boot camp days to run through their minds, will remember MAA Hedge's resounding voice, following first call in the morning, "Come on! You Twerps! Hit the deck!" Truth compels me to state that there were but few who failed to comply when the order was given.

Through the days and weeks that followed, we learned the rudiments of close order drill, flank movements, bayonet defense, hand grenade throwing and the manual of arms. Between drills we were assigned to various duties, such as mess detail, guard, or cleanup. Scarce a moment we had to ourselves. There were musters to stand, clothing to be issued, and shots to take.

It has been said of the Navy that it had ways of performing a task peculiar to itself. Men early learned the truth of the saying, "There is a right way, a wrong way, and a Navy way." No matter how well a certain plan worker in civilian life, it had to be junked in the Navy. Not only was the manner of doing things different from what was accepted "outside" but new vocabularies had to be mastered, and new dietary courses accepted. For instance, a floor was a "deck" and a wall was a "bulkhead" even if it was a thousand miles to the nearest ship, and the objects referred to were parts of a sod house. And baked navy beans was the established dish for breakfast! Though the

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men ate their portions of beans with relish (and catsup), they were never fully converted to the idea that such a food should begin a busy day.

About the time we had become fairly well acquainted with those who worked, drilled, or bunked near us, and men began to talk of the girls they left at home, we received orders to be transferred. Not only transferred to different companies and platoons, but many were to leave the camp itself. Some were sent to Camp Peary, near Williamsburg, Va., others went to Camp Bradford, and a few remained at Allen.

Camp Peary, in mid-November 1942, was a quivering lake of mud, on which tarpaper huts were floating. Larger vessels, (warehouses and mess halls) were anchored here and there, with flotsam, in the form of uprooted pine trees, still swirling about them—swirled by bulldozers!

After a time the deeper water was filled in with soil, and the shallows drained off into the York River. Then wooden sidewalks were constructed along the company streets and, later, connected with shack doorways, making it possible to travel about without wearing overshoes or rubber boots.

My platoon, a part of D. Company, under Chief Walter S. Bruce, assembled in a small shack, not far from a deep pine woods, common in that part of the state. The area immediately about our hut was the tangle of upturned tree roots, weeds, and whatnot, that usually accumulates in waste lands during early days of camp construction.

One of our first duties was to landscape the lawn. With rakes, spades, hoes, axes and wheelbarrows, we went to work. In a remarkably short time our real estate began to look more attractive. But we were not content with mere leveling and clearing. Details were sent into the surrounding woods to bring in small shrubs and wild flowers. Young pines, holly, dogwood, and other forms of local flora were set about the yards in more or less order—with more or less chances of survival. We had done such a good job, in fact, the Skipper of the 45th Battalion,

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Commander C. G. Smallwood, a former Captain in the Army of World War I, commended us on our industry.

The 45th, however, had larger things to do than to beautify Camp Peary. Scarcely had the agriculture implements been returned to the Supply office, and their return duly credited to it, than orders came for the Battalion to begin its military instruction where it had been interrupted some weeks before. Whereas, at Camp Allen, we had been under the instruction of Navy men, here at Peary, we found that we were to be given the "know how" by members of the Marine Corps.

Since all manner of rumors and stories, as to the severity of the Marine curriculum, had preceeded our participation, we were about ready to be drawn and quartered when our officers turned us, Chiefs and all, over to the green-garbed instructors. Soon we were "un-learning" much that we had been told at Allen, and, in our confusion, made glaring mistakes in obeying commands during close order drill.

One reason for these errors, it should be stated, was because we had not yet learned to translate, in the field, such orders as "Riflanarch! Leflankarch! Rip Arc! and Ford Harch!" pure Brooklynese for "Right Flank! March! Left Flank! To The Rear! March! and Forward! March!" Once we familiarized ourselves with the language, and discovered the difference between the Blue Jacket's Manual and the Marines Handbook, we began to make progress toward being well drilled Seabees.

While speaking of the difference between the Navy and Marine types of drill, it might be well to relate that, on Kodiak, much later in 45th history, we were placed under the Army's drill-masterrs, learning further means of waging war on the enemy. So it was, when the time came for the Battalion to be decommissioned, it had a somewhat meager, but well rounded, though yet untried, military education.

With every move of the Battalion, every change of platoon or company personnel, my circle of acquaintances widened. New friends were made every day . . . in the mess hall, the

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showers, the drill formation, and even at work. Some, through a similiarity of interests, race, or disposition, became better friends than the others, but, taking the men as a group, one and all, they were a friendly lot.

In seeking human interest stories for our newly organized battalion newspaper, "The Forty-Fiver," I was privileged to meet among others, Riley Singley, B. A. Tippins, Joseph Batchelor, Andrew Androvic, Kingdon Lytle, Chester Rawlins, Nick Pocrnich, Ernest Newton, Clyde Riblet, Fred (Kid) Rohr, and Ernest and Edward Wagner, brothers, as well as Phillip and Robert Couture, father and son.

As the month of December rolled around, we talked of our "boot" leave to visit our homes and show off our new uniforms. It is a customary vacation usually afforded recruits after they have completed some weeks of preliminary training. Finally we were officially notified that such a leave would be forthcoming, and plans were made to let a few men go at a time. But after we had sent word to our folks that we would be home, orders were issued that all leaves were cancelled. Not only was the bad news given to us on Christmas Eve, but for a present, next day, we were all given typhoid shots!

New Year's Day found the entire Battalion, on three trains, streaking on as many roads, toward Port Hueneme, California. The section on which I traveled followed the Mexican boundry line most of the way. Much secrecy surrounded the movement of the train, and at night, all window blinds were drawn.

While running out of St. Louis, I asked Chief G. J. Phillips (later Lieutenant) if he would wire my wife of my approach to Kansas City so that she might meet me at the Union Station when we pulled in. (The schedule called for us to be in Kansas City at eleven at night). The wire was sent, and my wife remained at the depot until after 2 A.M. but we did not see each other. Instead of stopping at the station for a meal, as we had been lead to believe we would, the train halted in the "bottom" yards a mile away!

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Luck had not entirely deserted me, however, for when the train paused a while in the Kansas City, Kansas, yards, I called our apartment from a switchman's shanty phone. My wife was at the moment returning from her long vigil at the station. We talked until I heard the train's bell start to ring, then climbed aboard as the highball signal was given.

At Port Hueneme, Calif., we found the camp in the throes of construction. Quonset huts served as our shelter now, some of which had, for heat, oil-burning stoves. Our hut did not. Since the nights are chilly, and the California cold has a way of getting into one's marrow bones, we searched among the huts until a stove was "found" for our heatless one.

Truly the way of Naval procedure is a marvel to behold! After we had more or less resigned ourselves to being denied our expected "boot" leave, and looked for a quick jump overseas without the last farewell with our folks, information was given us that we would get the leave! Since many of us would have been nearer home from Camp Peary, and since the cost of travel came out of our own pockets, it seemed a shame to haul us away out to California before giving us our visit. Nevertheless, nine days after we reached Hueneme, we all were headed back across the land on a special troop train, many of us to return to the very towns through which we had gone but the few days before! We all had 14 days, or less, to cross the country, say goodbye and scoot back to our battalion, the time of the leave varying with the distance traveled. For men going to New York or other eastern cities, the leave was a day or two longer, but even at that, none of us had more than three days at home.

The railroads, in most instances, were accommodating to Service men, but the special leave train chartered to take us east from Oxnard, near Hueneme, was an exception. The most filthy conditions existed in the antiquated coaches and pullman cars. There was no water either to drink or wash in, and the dusty accumulation of the years since 1910, (the date of the

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cars' manufacture), oozed and sifted out of the cushions, from around the windows, and up through the flooring. (Pardon me! It's the "deck!")

Though my special group was in pullman cars, trainmen forbid the use of the bunks. They came through about bed time to see that no one violated the order. But shortly after the sour faced individuals had passed on, from somewhere a bunk crank was uncovered, and bunk after bunk was let down. There were no pillow cases or sheets on the mattresses, but that bothered us not at all. We divided up the uncovered pillows and pads, and proceeded to make ourselves comfortable.

Presently two muttering trainmen came through the cars, fire in their eyes. "If you men do not get out of those bunks and put them back as you found them, we'll pull this train off on a siding and wait until you do!" For answer, about twenty assorted snores came echoing to the speakers ears. No one moved.

Five minutes later the train officials were back, this time with a couple of Battalion officers. "Better put the bunks up," the officers advised as they left the car. A few bunks went up for a few minutes, only to be pulled back down when scarce the dust of the opened door had settled.

Whether the train pulled into a siding to await another's passing or went into it because of the action of the tired men, is not known to me, but this I can state, we were not stopped long, nor were we out of the bunks until the morning light struggled in through the grime-besmeared windows.

A week later a special train was assembled to return us to the California coast, this time made up only of ancient coaches, equally as dirty and as uncomfortable as the ones on which we had ridden east. Since there was no water for washing, we were black as crows by the time we hopped off at Oxnard, and were taken out to camp in Navy busses.

After the 14 day interlude, the Battalion went into a renewed fever of close order drill. Under Lieut. G. G. Hayden, and drilled by various ex-army men within the ranks of the 45th,

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we enjoyed the sunshine and kicked up the brown dust between the rows of stately Eucalyptus trees, as we performed to command. Occasionally we went down to the beach and, there among the sand dunes and saw grass, went through mock battles in the stiff winds from off the ocean.

A good portion of our brief stay at Hueneme was taken up by the drawing of issued gear, the nature of which told us, if other means had been unavailing, that we were headed toward Alaska, or to some cold climate. And, when we detrained at Seattle, lugging all this gear, there was no doubt that the Northlands were to be our homes for a while.

Chapter 3.

KODIAK: ISLE OF SNOW . . . AND FLOWERS!



WHEN THE GREAT SHIP, S. S. Wharton, pulled away from the Seattle dock, on the afternoon of January 24, 1943, she was loaded to the scuppers with Alaska bound troops. Among the thousands of men packed aboard her, were two battalions of Seabees, the 41st and the 45th Battalions.

To many, this going to sea was a new experience. To others it was but a repetition of a previous trip taken in an earlier war, but this time going west instead of east. There were the same long messlines, the same poor toilet facilities, the same seasickness when the seas grew rough, and the same mass-jammed groups of men. And, before the trip was completed, the same longing for solid land!

But life aboard the Wharton was not all grief. For me, at least, there was much to see in the way of bird life in the air, or on the surface of the waves themselves. The commonest bird of course was the blackfooted albatross. These flyers were always to be seen following after the ship, diving down to the surface to study some object that had whetted their curiosity, or awakened their gastronomic interest. Since our course was along the western continental Alaskan Islands, we always had gulls with us, and petrels. Shearwaters and puffins grew more common as we neared our destination.

The surface of the sea was littered with floating fragments of kelp and other seaweed, sections of pilings and various dimension lumber. Sometimes the kelp would be so matted together as to form rafts several yards across, rising and falling on the

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waves without being disentangled. Whales, too, were observed, but usually their spouting would be all there was to mark their nearness, though there were few times the mammals were alongside, and quite near the surface of the sea.

Late in the afternoon of January 28, four days after leaving Seattle, the Wharton steamed into St. Paul's Harbor, at Kodiak Island, not far from the little frontier town of the same name. To add to the event, the ship went aground on a mudbank, and had to await high tide to clear herself and move up to the dock.

Before us, a great snow covered mountain rose up into the storm clouds, its crown obscured by the blizzard that was blowing at the time. Snow squalls tore at the ship as the vessel was warped to her mooring, and the entire earth seemed, suddenly, to have been transformed into an Arctic waste. As much as we had longed to get on land, we were not too sure we wanted to step onto such an inhospitable-looking island as the one before us.

Next morning, after a warm chow, we, with our gear, (one duffel bag, two seabags, one rain coat stuffed with underclothes and the like, and an overburdened hand bag), stood ready to debark at a moment's notice. Those who had gone ashore ahead of us, had climbed aboard big trucks and disappeared into the storm, somewhere up the mountain side.

As we watched the big, many wheeled vehicles come sliding down the grade from the higher ledge, where a roadway wound along, we wondered, sometimes, if gravity would not win in the struggle, and send the machines crashing into the bay. But always, in the nick of time, it seemed, the drivers would regain control of their trucks and, with a Seabee flourish, bring them to a stop at the required spot.

The morning was well along before it came my turn to climb into a big covered truck. I felt lucky in being last in, since I was thus permitted to view the scenery as we drove along. But we had not gone far when, for some reason, the Alaskan snow turned to a driving rain, and proceeded to make the icy roads

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even more slippery. The wind whipped the rain spray into the back of the truck, soaking those of us who had taken positions there.

For an hour we slouched and skidded along over the icy roads, winding about in such a fashion I had begun to believe the driver was lost. But shortly thereafter, we pulled up before a great, unfinished barracks overlooking the bay, a building later to be known as the "Marine Barracks." This proved to be our first home.

I believe that as long as men of the 45th Battalion shall live, they shall not forget the chow served them at the NAS mess hall that first evening. The food aboard ship had been of poor quality we thought, and, due to seasickness, the desire to eat was gone, anyway. But should a man have felt a bit above the regular diet enough to ask for "seconds" . . . he might as well have asked for the cook's right arm! But here, in a well appointed mess hall, we were not only given all the food we wanted, but urged to take a second helping if we thought we could eat it.

There was even more rejoicing the following morning when eggs, "sunny side up" were served us! Truly, we thought, life in the North was not "stacking up" in a bad way. The climax, however, came a few mornings later when hot cackles, with butter and plenty of syrup, were stacked on our trays! We decided to stake a claim in Alaska, then and there.

There was little time lost in dividing the Battalion up into working details, and sending them to various parts of the island. Some were assigned to the mess hall, a few to the base laundry, others on survey parties, getting the bearings of our new camp site. Those of us not on such details were relegated to work in the lumber yard, an unpleasant task that usually fell to incoming battalions until they got themselves organized.

The lumber, brought from ships in regular sand trucks, after the yard was reached, was, like sand, dumped in unsorted piles wherever a vacant spot could be found. To make matters

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worse, the ground, snow and ice covered, presented unsafe footing, and the lower lumber planking had to be chopped out of the frozen mud and water by axes or picks to release it.

Work went on every day, seven days a week, despite the weather's worst behavior. Often snow blew so thickly about us, we could not see from one end of the yard to the other. Sometimes williwaws would come sneaking around Old Woman's Mountain, to throw down lumber piles as fast as we could set them up. It was due to the erratic behavior of one of these storms that the Battalion experienced its first fatality to personnel.

Among the assortment of lumber supplies, there were many sections of pre-fabricated, hut-like houses. Sometimes these sections were too heavy for hand stacking or piling, so a derrick, or crane, would be brought into use. On this fatal morning a stack of these wall-sections, some ten feet high, had just been placed, when a gust of wind whipped down the bay, and threw lumber right and left. Two heavy sections lifted up and came down upon the workmen below, killing Vernon Roth, of Drake, North Dakota, and injuring Sam Logan, of Lawrence, Kansas.

It was not long, however, until various projects took us away from the lumber yard. With no sorrow at the change, we willed the work to other battalions who would succeed us. Crews of men now were assigned to water-front work, building barges and repairing damaged boats. Steamfitters and plumbers were put on sewer and water pipe line construction. Carpenters were sent out to the Russian River area to erect Quonset huts, build mess halls, and otherwise construct a place for us to be sheltered from the weather.

In the more or less unorganized condition in which we found ourselves, there were many men who had to do things for which they were quite unfitted. Sheet metal men drove ambulances, cement men acted as cooks, ship fitters were Company clerks, etc. Not that they did their new tasks poorly,

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but there was considerable wastage of talent in the realignment to the new labors. And more often than not, they worked under extreme difficulty and handicap.

The mail censors, for instance, under Lieut. J. P. Allen, Battalion Dentist, had to leave long before daylight to get to their Quonset hut office, on the Russian River. They piled into open trucks and rode through the night, storming and snowing as it usually was, and arrived chilled and stiff on the job. For meals the censors had to hitch rides on passing trucks, some two or three miles, over winding, snow covered roads, to a neighbor Battalion's messhall, on Bell's Flats, near Sargent's Creek.

This went on for ten days or until the Marine Barrack was vacated by the Battalion. Then the censors lived together in one of the newly constructed barracks of the "38th Battalion Area" at the foot of "Mount Matterhorn," a towering peak to the west. Their office was set up in the building in which they lived. But, by this time the messhall that had been under construction at the Russian River Area, was completed, and meals were being served there.

So orders were issued for the censors to eat at the new hall, back within a block of the hut once used as office by them! It was the same old hitch hiking, only reversed in direction. Since the days on Kodiak in January are short, the noon trip was the only one we made in daylight. The discomforts of riding, jampacked, in open, or covered trucks, was such that not a few men walked the trip both ways rather than undertake the ride such as it was.

John Alexander, and I, were two who thus sought our exercise, since we both served on the censor board, and found little time to be out in the open. We would bundle up and set out a half hour before time for the truck to pick up the others. With a walking staff in hand, and John in the lead, we would climb the snowy shelf to the main road, and there strike out in a swinging, often sliding, pace into the darkness.

Always dependent on the stars for guidance in a strange

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country, I was at a loss on Kodiak, for seldom are the winter skies clear enough for stellar bearing . . . at least it was so in February. John, however, possessed the peculiar knack of knowing where he was at all times, no matter how dark the night, or the lack of trail markings.

We were cautioned against the possibility of meeting one of the great bears for which the island is famous. But not once did we see such an animal, nor anything remotely resembling it. It must be admitted, however, more than once we halted in our tracks to listen to scratching ice sounds that came down to us from the snowy slopes above our trail, or when an erratic gust of wind caused a cottonwood tree to rub trunks with a leaning neighbor.

But, by and large, these walks in the Alaskan darkness, especially the pre-dawn ones, were most pleasurable. For it was on such times we had a chance to get away from people for a while; to think our own thoughts without interruption. Sometimes when the dark was still, we would walk for 15 or 20 minutes without saying a word to each other. Sometimes we would pause, as though by order, to listen to muted songs of some snow covered stream, or to catch the faint whisper of an arctic owl's wings overhead. No comment seemed necessary, and as by mutual consent we would resume our travels in silence.

The Bells Flats mess hall, during the last week in February, was in operation by the 45th Battalion. Our long trips to Russian River were things of the past, though the way to and from our barracks and mess hall was a rugged, snow covered one of over a half mile or more. Sometimes, if time was available, John and I would make detours through the alder thickets, and along the shores of Beaver Lake. By so doing, we added to our knowledge of the island's inhabitants, and its terrain.

With the erection of the Battalion post office on Bells Flats, the censor board found itself in a fine setup for the work of making holes in Seabee letters. A portion of the Quonset

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hut housing U. S. Tillman, and his post office, was set aside for the censors. There, under Flourescent lights, and warmed by an oil stove, they read, dissected, and sent on to loved ones in the states, some thousand letters each day. It was a thankless task, and one that often seemed silly to the men whose duty it was, but Naval Intelligence required it, so it had to be done!

At this time Lt. Allen was replaced as head of the Censor board by Ensign R. R. Rising. Leonard Fisher, was his assistant, and through him those of us on the board received our orders. Besides John Alexander and myself, already mentioned, others on the board were as follows: John M. Corbett, Harry E. Griffith, Raymond Leo Medici, Ralph R. Murphy, A. O. Peterson, Leo E. Roberts, and Dean K. Sanders. At a later date, when the battalion was split and the various sections sent to separate bases, Thomas E. Cavanangh, James L. Hollis, and Clyde Doke, were added to the staff. But not all these men however served at the same time.

With the exception of officer's mail, all letters written by members of the battalion passed through the hands of the censors. Until the troops learned what could be said and what could not be mentioned, there was considerable work for the razor blades or scissors. Later, when more complete information was available to the men, there was comparatively little work for the cutting instruments to do, for despite the popular belief to the contrary, there was little effort to cheat censorship regulations.

There may be a better morale builder, among service men away from home and loved ones, than the uninterrupted exchange of mail, but I have yet to discover it. In some Battalions, men were forbidden to send out more than three letters a week. To the credit of the three Commanders of the 45th, C. G. Smallwood, J. W. Jones, and J. P. Roulett, there were no such orders issued, though there were a few times, during periods of rush, when men were advised to hold their out going letters to a minimum.

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Under battalion postmaster, Tillman, above referred to, assisted by Hubbard L. Hamilton, often through trying and difficult times, 45th mail was kept active. Nor was the receiving, sending out, and sorting, the only tasks assigned to the mailmen. Besides the sale of stamps and war bonds, the sale of money orders occupied a good portion of their time. During the month of March, 1943, according to Tillman's records, he sold to battalion members, \$50,000.00 in money orders alone. Other months were not far under this amount.

Each company had its own mail orderly. It was the duty of these men to obtain the mail from the postmaster and see that it reached the hands of those to whom it was addressed. Robert B. Ruhs, took care of Headquarters; Earl Black, of A-Company; Harry M. Stewart of B-Company; James T. Simpson, of C-Company, and ever smiling Robert O. Liddle was welcome man for D-Company.

The second number of the Battalion's publication "The Forty Fiver" appeared with the date of March 20, 1943, across its first page, while the organization occupied the area between Sargents' Creek and Russian River. The first copy appeared while the Battalion was yet at Camp Peary, in Virginia. Beginning under the guidance of Lieut. W. B. Ricks, and Herman Mertens, as editor, the "Forty Fiver" continued until the battalion was broken up late in June, 1944. William Raue, Charley Schenk, and Frank O'Neill and I, aided in putting out the initial paper, but the second issue carried the name of Lloyd E. Weaver, as editor.

The "45er" was printed by mimeograph, and was embellished by drawings by Charley Schenk. In the second issue I had an article on the work of the censors that was reprinted in the Base publication, THE WILLIWAWS. It was this article that gave me an opportunity to exchange my censorship duties for one of more pleasure to myself.

John Kenny, editor of the base publication, came to the censorship office one day and asked me to come work on his paper.

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Since I had done considerable news writing, I told him he could count on me if Commander Smallwood, in charge of the Battalion, would give me permission.

Thus it was, after a visit before the Commander, lasting upwards to a half hour, during which time that officer left me at "attention," he admonished me not to forget the Battalion Newspaper, and to consider myself excused from further duties connected with his command until such time as the Battalion moved to other bases.

The office of the Williwaws was in a Quonset hut on the margin of Old Woman's Bay, and near to the Naval Air Station, its Library, Administration, and Recreational buildings. I found the work delightful, for it gave me a chance to look over the island, meet celebrities who came by, and to visit with the various departments of the Naval Air Station, Sub. Base, and other Seabee battalions. Also it gave me access to a typewriter on which I found time to do a little writing on my own, writing for, and selling to, the Christian Science Monitor, an article on Alaskan wild flowers, while there.

The staff of the Williwaws, while I was with it, consisted of Editorial Director, John Kenny; Managing Editor, Krebs Friend, Darrell Harms and Willis Heath. Later James Trelawney came to take John Kenny's place, and Herman Mertens, of the 45th Battalion, was added. Though I was listed as one of the Associate Editors, in reality I was "leg man" . . . and happy with the duty attending such title.

It was my pleasure, one day to have Morely Cassidy, of the North American Newspaper Alliance, walk into the office and introduce himself. Later John Boufort, correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor, spent a couple of days in looking over our island home. Father Benard R. Hubbard, "The Glacier Priest," famous for his books and lectures on the Northland, was a highlight on one of my day's work.

At the time I interviewed Father Hubbard, the Japs still occupied the island of Kiska, though they had recently been

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cleaned off Attu. The priest, in his easy manner, among other things, said the Japs should be speedily removed from Kiska, lest they be there a year, and so doing would be eligible to apply for citizenship papers! He was joking of course.

One of my enjoyable "leg man" tasks was to visit the various construction projects over the island. It was my duty to write about anything I thought would be interesting to the readers of the Williwaws. Though I visited all projects, those by the men of the 45th Battalion held greater interest, of course.

One of my most frequent stopping places, not only because it was near the newspaper office, but because the men employed there were so friendly, was the barge-building yard. Here the great timbered "craft of all work," were assembled, painted and launched. Under the supervision of the waterfront officer, Lieut. B. Taulbee, and Lieut. H. B. Gilroy, with Chiefs Oscar L. Mullich, and Georga A. Heller on the job, the great floats were constructed in record time. Ernest Duffield, B. A. Tippins, and Robert J. Vickery, are remembered as being members of the crew who were more than interested in their labor.

Across Old Woman's Bay, at the foot of the great earth "run" down the side of Old Woman's Mountain, there stood a large bayside building in which Seabee welders worked miracles with tiny blue flames. When the storms were bad, I would make my way along the sea wall to the shelter of this building. There I would talk with Merle G. Leonard, and Ted Elam, on topics near and dear to men away from home.

Sometimes my refuge from the weather would be the base saw filing shop, where Albert D. Whitaker, and H. A. Robinson, not only presided over the teeth of the island's saws, but maintained one of the most complete "art galleries" in Western Alaska.

About twelve miles from camp the little frontier town of Kodiak was situated. Save for a little cannery village, of a few houses, across the island, and, because of some diseases sup-

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posed to be prevalent there, out of bounds to the troops, Kodiak was the only "liberty" town for us.

With the easing up on "no liberty" restrictions, a certain few Seabees were permitted to go into the town each week. When it came my turn to go, I availed myself of the chance, and caught the afternoon liberty bus. I reached the town, covered by dust, but anxious to see the sights.

Near the edge of Kodiak, at the time, but, later closed by the Military, stood three sporting houses, known by the color of their painted trim, as "the White House," "the Green House" and "the Yellow House." I was told that within the walls of these buildings, for \$3.00, a man could purchase a few minutes of feminine favor. That the place was popular could be attested to the fact that, usually, there was a line of men waiting to get inside!

Kodiak boasts a glass front bank, several general stores, a movie, half dozen saloons, eating place and drugstore-curio shops. The ancient Russian church, presided over by Father Gregory Globoff, a show place for the tourists, was, while we were on Kodiak, burned to the ground.

Men and women who appeared on the sidewalks and unpaved streets of Kodiak were of mixed racial stock and social strata. The mucklukshod native women (Esquimo or Indian) brushed elbows with well dressed women recently up from the States. Roughly garbed pioneers, the love of the great silent places in their blood, and eyelids narrowed from an eternity of snow scenes, ranged along bar rails with "dapper dans" from the cities of Canada, or mining engineers from "Back East."

Service uniforms, of course, predominated; soldiers, sailors, marines and even coast guards. The men thronged the curio shops, the drinking places, and other points of interest to men away from home. Black market liquor could be had by paying exorbitant prices. Certain of the citizenry always managed to buy all the whisky and other "hard stuff" shipped into town. When throats were dry enough men paid as high as twenty,

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thirty, yes even fifty and sixty dollars a quart for established brands!

Food, as one would expect, was also high in price, and not too high in quality, nor quantity. Eating places boldly advertised the menu and price per plate. Hamburgers: 35 cents, ham sandwich with mustard: 40 cents; plate of lamb chops and fried potatoes: \$2.50; round steak dinner: \$4.00. There were other items of similar markup. More than one sailor, his wallet stuffed with newly paid wages, batted his eyes at the price, but went ahead and ordered a \$4.00 steak dinner only to be told there were no steaks!

Lasting memories of Kodiak include Barometer mountain overhanging the town; the smell of the fish cannery; the dandelions growing beside a walk; the mixed races of kids playing on a vacant lot; the curio shops, and the colorfully trimmed "sporting" houses at the edge of town.

Chapter 4.

ISLAND ROUTINE



WHEN THE 45TH BATTALION was formed at Camp Allen, in Virginia, I found myself a member of D-Company, with Lieut. W. B. Ricks as Commanding Officer, and Otis Thompson as Company Clerk. Under their combined supervision and tender admonition, I seemed to get along with small friction, and made a host of friends. I hoped the arrangement could be continued through the balance of the war.

But along in April, while we yet waded snow and slush on Kodiak, some one with a Seabee brainstorm decided the men needed shifting about. D-Company men found themselves in A-Company. Men of Company B found their names on C-Company musters. Indeed, there was a general scene of packing of gear bags, of bidding each other goodbye, and of trudging off through the mud to locate the new quarters and new surroundings.

Not only did these inter-battalion changes prove to be of small worth to the organization as a whole, but they caused needless unpleasantness within the ranks as well. Friendships of long standing were broken, and men found themselves under new officers and new regulations. Not only this, but the rearrangement tilted, if not completely upset, the appercarts of men who had been promised a rating advancement or who, for one reason or another, wished to remain with the groups with which they started their military life.

For about a month I was a member of A-Company, under Lieut. J. E. Gillespie. Charles M. Cross was Company Clerk

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and J. P. Taheny (later Carpenter) had charge of my platoon. The men were friendly, and I soon began to feel at home again. But scarcely had my new address brought me mail, than the whole arrangement was again upset! Back I went to D-Company, now under Chief William Carlson. Back, also, came most of the men who had been transferred out! The story with other companies was the same . . . more confusion! Apparently, this new rearrangement proved satisfactory, or the officers in charge grew tired of the game. At any rate, there were no more changes in D-Company until time for the entire battalion to be decommissioned, over a year later.

With the passing of April, much of the lowland snow had melted. Yellow violets began to show in protected areas along water courses; shooting stars burst to crimson around the boulders on the bluffs. Cinqufoil and anemones blazed yellow and green in the Alaskan sun shine. With additional retreat of winter, the moss covered slopes and hilltops, long flattened by the weight of snowfall, lifted up a mantle of varying shades of green and gray. Wild geraniums and Jacob's Ladder began to burn blue, followed by the purple of monk's hood and Alaskan lupine. And yet more blue was spread in the valleys by the blooming of native wild iris.

To the men of the Armed Services who found snow on Kodiak when they arrived, and expected to see its crystals the year around, the sight of so many flowers, growing wild, surprised and pleased them. But even the most botanical men of the troops were not prepared to witness the flood of blooms that engulfed the island when summer was at its height. Then the fireweed set fire to the place, and terrestrial orchids, yarrow, beach pea, wild arnica, Siberian aster, squaw lily, cow parsnip, snapdragon, mountain azalea, and bluebell, poured color to the conflagration, until the whole island was a series of kaleidoscopic hues.

But flowers were not the only objects of Nature one might see on Kodiak. Though beavers are not native to the island, the

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animals have taken it unto themselves as home. Every water course, even those quite remote from sizable trees, has its quota of the energetic, flat-tailed creatures. In one small valley, through which a small stream meanders downward to St. Paul's harbor, I counted ten separate earth and stick emplacements, each impounding its own fresh water lake.

The Kodiak beavers usually cut down the smaller cottonwoods, but were not averse to tackling much larger ones. Around the Bell's Flats lake grew black cottonwood trees with trunks to the diameter of twenty inches or more. Many of these trees had been cut down by beavers in such a manner the upper limbs and twigs were submerged in the water. There was one tree, yet standing, with a bole in excess of 30 inches, that seemed to be the object of a nightly gnawing. At the rate of cutting, in progress while we camped near, it is judged that by the following fall the tree would be down.

Though beavers are supposed to work only at night, I have watched these Alaskan animals at their cutting even in broad daylight. Since they are protected from any but lawless hunters, these engineers of the animal world, are quite tame, and pay little attention to passing trucks, or even men afoot. A few men of the battalion, I am sorry to relate, used the animals about camp as targets. A few beavers were killed for their skins, but the killers, when it was found that no furs could be shipped out, disposed of the pelts for a small fee, or threw them away.

In a group in excess of a thousand men, of all walks and interests in life, it is not surprising to find those, for whom the lure of killing is of paramount interest. So it was, at spawning time, with the streams choked with salmon struggling to go up the current to lay their eggs, that a few men found delight in throwing rocks at the massed fish. Some men even enjoyed the "sport" of throwing at a female merganser whose brood of five newly hatched, scampered about on the water like crickets. The shooting of seagulls was boasted about, and the bringing down of unsuspecting bald eagles something to

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point to as evidence of unexcelled marksmanship. But it must be said that the greater number of Battalion members were content "to live and let live," finding ample enjoyment in being onlookers to nature's pageant.

Hanging over the camp on Bell's Flats, a towering peak, remotely resembling the Matterhorn of Europe, reached into the sky. The barracks in the "38th Area" were built close to the foot of this giant pile. From the moment the storms cleared away sufficiently to permit us to see the top of the mountain, there were many of us who had a desire to climb up and look beyond.

While yet the snow lay deep upon the slopes and in the valley, John Alexander and I decided we would be numbered among those Seabees who had made it to the mountain's crown. Obtaining permission, one day, to be absent from our duties, we left our quarters shortly after the morning meal. We wrapped ourselves warmly against the keen wind that was blowing, and the chill we expected to find on the higher reaches.

We spent nearly an hour in finding a place to get across Sargent's Creek, and upward through the tangled baneberry bushes. Here the moss clustered in the forks of the trees in shapes of small green bears or bronze porcupines. The snow was scarcely packed solid enough to support our weight, and many times we plunged into drifts to our armpits, or head over heels down a terraced slope. But we laughed at the misadventures that befell us, and set our course by the peak in the sky.

On these lower mountain slopes we often encountered snowshoe rabbits (varying hares) where these rodents, in fur yet white, had come to gnaw the bark of low growing bushes. The animals were tame, or had not yet learned to fear the human race, for they scarcely would get out of the way as we trudged upward past them. Save for the sudden appearance of two ptarmigan that leaped, quail-like from the deep

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grasses before us, and sailed around out of sight, we saw no other animals or birds upon the mountain.

We climbed more slowly as we gained the higher ledges, pausing to rest and "blow" in ever shortening intervals. We found the snow less deep on the steeper slopes, but in the hollowed out gorges, it seemed bottomless. Certain areas, devoid of snow through the wind's steady blowing, were found to be carpeted with deep mosses of hues varying from yellow-green to maroon and gray. Here and there stony upthrusts raised heads from the mossy sea like sealions' heads from the surface of the bay.

Some time later we climbed around a great rocky shoulder, and crawled up a steep, mossy slope, using our hands as much as our feet. The peak now towered above so high and so near it actually seemed to be leaning over our heads! From out of a sky bowl of deepest blue, the wind, now almost at gale violence, blew with such tooth that it not only bit through our sweaty garments, but filled me, at least, with a fear that we both were in real danger of being blown away!

With the excuse I needed to "catch my breath," I quickly seated myself on a nearby boulder outcrop, and surveyed the trail ahead. Because the way was snowy, narrow, and part of it actually seemed to overhang a thousand foot chasm, I tried to talk John into abandoning further ascent until a more quiet day. I casually mentioned the fact that the war was, as yet, unwon, and that we would be more help to our folks if we went home intact.

But John, having once made up his mind, let nothing change it. He swore, as he took up the march again, that he would reach the top "if it took a leg to do it." Feeling a bit abashed that he was going on alone, I was about resolved to accompany him, when a terrific gust of wind whipped around the peak, whirling snow into my eyes, and destroying my resolution with a momentary panic that caused my fingers to tighten about a boulder projection.

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"Go on," I said, "Good luck be yours . . . you'll be needing it before you get back. I'll wait here!"

After the space of half hour had elapsed, I saw John's figure against the windswept sky. He was waving from the topmost crag! Faint and thin I heard his voice coming down to me, "It's fine up here. Come on up." I replied by yelling congratulations, but pointed down the mountain towards our camp.

It was well past the hour of noon by the time John reached me, and together we started down the glistening slope. Each of us, when we found the way too steep for walking, sat upon the snow and, guided somewhat by our walking sticks, coasted down for hundreds of feet. In this manner we bettered our upward climb more more than a third.

Since the rock footbridge over Sargent's Creek was a mile out of our way, we boldly waded through the swift current, finding our garments and ourselves no wetter nor colder than we had been before the crossing. When we reached our barracks, tired to exhaustion, we showered, put on dry clothes, and relaxed on our bunks. Nor did we stir until the chow truck came for the evening chow "Hounds." Other hikes we took, but from none of them were we quite as tired.

The wild life of Kodiak held a peculiar fascination for me. It was all so new and strange, and knowing I would soon move on West, likely never again to have a chance to study it, I lost no time in seeing what was to be seen.

Later in the year, Riley Singley, and I, often hitch hiked a trail along the mountain roads of Kodiak, going sometimes twenty miles or more away from camp. Though we were in bear country, and the Kodiak bear is supposed to be vicious, we went unarmed. More than once we were startled by sounds that might have been made by the animals, but save for brown fur left on broken twigs, scraped, no doubt, from bruin's sides as it went by, we had no indications we had been near danger.

Deer, too, were in the area of our travels. Singly, on trips

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by himself, saw numerous groups of these branchy-horned animals, but when we were together, there were none to be seen, though tracks and other signs indicated they had not been far away. Seals could be seen in the shallow water along the shores about the island, and beaver ponds, where the water was everlasting, were always plentiful.

When the dolly vardens began to run in the creeks and rivers, battalion fisherman began to grow restless. Faraway looks crept into their eyes, and the men lost weight and appetites. As a cure of this condition, our Chaplain, Lieut. E. F. Shumaker, procured, by means unknown to the writer, fishing rods and reels for the Welfare Department. These he loaned to the Seabee nimrods.

Early in the cool of the mornings, before the call to breakfast, the fishermen would be seen making their way through the gray mists to their favorite spots. Formost among these men were Charles B. Stephens, Thorning C. Stanley, N. H. Wilson, and Arthur E. Reddick. Sometimes they would return with creels heavy with "dollies," but even in seasons of plenty, there were times when even these men returned empty handed!

With the arrival of the "humpies," the streams of Kodiak boiled with the movement of millions of fish. Battalion fishermen, aware that, due to pre-spawning mutation of throat and jaws, these salmon could not strike at bait or flies, spent spare time in giggling them with improvised gigggs, or in snagging them by the simple procedure of drawing a many barbed line across their malformed backs.

By late July the spawning fish hoards had so choked the streams there was room for no others to wiggle. When a salmon, through vigorous tail-fin-flapping, found itself on the sand, or among the rocks on the shore, it could not get back into the water, due to its place being taken by others. Where the water was shallow, the fish often went for hours with the upper half of their bodies out of the stream. These exposed

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portions would, on bright days, sunburn and became a dusty gray color.

Nature, at certain seasons, seems unnecessarily cruel. And not more so than to salmon at spawning time. Since the spawning trek ends only in death, the fish have little regard for their own bodies, or those of their fellow travelers. They slash each other's sides with razor-sharp teeth until raw and shredding flesh actually trails in the stream. And even the fish left stranded and gasping on the shore, or impounded in pools too shallow for movement, are not permitted to die in peace. Even before the final spark of life is out, their lidless eyes are scooped from their sockets by marauding gulls. Truly, at times, Nature is a cruel mother!

While there were many men in the Battalion who would rather fish than try their skills at any other sport, there also were many men who had equal love for baseball, basketball or boxing. Within the well rounded Recreation Department, of which the 45th could boast, despite the urgencies of war, there were opportunities for all.

Under the sponsorship of a most pleasing personality, Lieut. F. Joyce, the boxers and fighters had many bouts scheduled for the entertainment of the island fans. And, to the credit of the 45th men who wore the leather gloves, they won the greater number of bouts staged with other Navy units, and took more than their share of inter-service matches.

Inspired by Boxing Coach, Robert C. Bonner, who succeeded William T. Kicklighter at such tasks, the following boxers entered the squared ring for the Battalion: Thomas J. Adams, James E. Tietze, Donald J. Gensley, James (Bill) Shirley, Robert T. Bucholtz, William L. Tate, and Michael G. Hanzek.

On Kodiak, Basketball was not a forgotten sport by any means. Managed by Lieut. Frank A. Wood, Jr., the squad raised the Battalion's sport banner to enviable heights. Among those playing on the team the following players are remem-

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bered: Raymond L. Medici, Leland E. Jeffs, Daniel B. Woodworth, Norman F. Rounds, Nicholas M. Roundtree, Howard H. Erich, and Ralph R. Murphy.

But, topping all the common sports in general interest, baseball, on Kodiak, as elsewhere, held its own. The Kingbees of the 45th Seabees, under the management of Lieut. E. H. Mitchell, went through an entire season of inter-island league games without a single defeat. Those who had a part in the winning are as follows: J. F. Shirley, A. M. Bosheide, C. A. Weaver, C. R. Paxton, H. E. Boyd, M. J. Milobar, G. R. Burns, W. J. Helmer, William Zampell, L. B. Dixon, M. G. Hanzek, H. H. Erich, T. J. Adams, and E. W. Sloan.

What would a group of Yanks do without music? They would do as the 45th Battalion did when up against just such a proposition. Under the supervision of Lt. Commander, J. W. Jones, who came into our fold while on Kodiak, and for a while had charge of the 45th, our band under the leadership of Lloyd E. Weaver, brightened many a weary hour with music of their own special blending.

Not only on board ship, while we headed through the Bering Sea, but after getting our work in order on Tanaga, the band was there and playing. The men who furnished us music deserve much credit for they often practiced during their spare hours when the rest of us were relaxing in manner that seemed best to our natures. Among those who made music were the following: John W. Fuss, Robert W. Klomfas, Robert F. Proost, and Francis Murphy, who wrote the official battalion song, "Our Battalion."

Chapter 5.

WE BECOME "YALE MEN"



THE ROUTINE OF THE DAY was upset, one morning in early May, when men of our Amphibious Army, from a bay full of strang looking vessels, swarmed over the island. LCI's and Higgin's boats floated on the water of Old Woman's Bay, while larger craft stood at anchor farther out in St. Paul's Harbor.

Upon the shoulder of the uniform of each man and officer there appeared the design of the "Amphibs," a silver knife superimposed on a circular field of blue. By this sign the men were known who gave such a good account of themselves, a few weeks later, when, at much cost to themselves, and more to the enemy, cleaned the Japs off the far island of Attu. They were, in fact the spearhead of our efforts to drive the Japs from the Aleutians.

With the "fumigating" of Attu, and the Japs own turning tail from Kiska, officials on Kodiak began to feel it was so far behind the front lines that danger of attack was small. Promptly, there began to appear, on the Base Plans of the Day, orders for a stricter enforcement of "Military Courtesy." The giving and receiving of the salute was stressed, and dire punishment was promised both officers and men who did not comply. The wearing of hats any way but "squared on the head" was made a crime, the keeping of the hands in pockets an offense against good conduct!

As an aid to enforcement of these regulations, an ensign was stationed before one of the windows of topside building, Naval Air Station, with orders to call in any man not comply-

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ing with them. Day in and day out, this watch was kept. Many a luckless lad was hailed into the office by runners sent out to order him in. At first a military "bawling out" was administered, but second and third offences were more severely dealt with, the culprit's own outfit being notified of the "crime," and punishment of loss of liberty, pay, or even rating, being more or less mandatory upon it.

With the advent of the "peacetime" regulations, and the greater stress put on military activities within the battalion, I began to grow restless. Though I enjoyed my work at the newspaper office, and the more or less freedom to do as I pleased, I wanted to be moving on.

This unsettled feeling was aggravated, no doubt, by losing, through an act of "Good Samaritism," our fine Multi-Lith Offset Printing Press, and attendant camera. Our Williwaws Magazine had gained so much favor among the troops that officials at Adak decided they, too, would put out a similar publication. Men were sent down to our office with material and pictures for the publishing of an issue of "The Aleutian Magazine." From us they learned the means and methods used, and with our help, put out a fine issue of their own.

Back in Adak, the "Aleutian" instantly attracted the attention of those in command. Immediately, since no new press could be obtained without great delay, strings were pulled right and left to have the Kodiak press shipped west. "Needed it for map making" the change order said! The consequence of the whole thing being that one morning when I passed the printing plant I saw men crating the Multi-Lith for shipment, by plane, to Adak. Not only this, but I soon learned two of our staff was being taken along, Chief Heath, and the 45th's own Herman Mertens. The Williwaws was promised a press "when one was available," but none ever arrived, nor did we really expect one. From then on, we published our stories and news on a thrice a week additional page to the Kodiak Daily Press, issued on a mimeograph, an effort not of

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value, and one that soon died from lack of interest, both to publisher and reader.

So it was that I welcomed the "scuttlebutt" that a part of the 45th, at least, would shortly head for Tanaga, to westward of Adak. However, unlike the usual brand of rumors, these turned out to be authentic, and came to pass as rumored. I had had enough of Kodiak anyway.

About this time, the Sims-Drake Construction Company of Seattle, civilian builders of much of the facilities on Kodiak, sold to the Navy the USS Yale. The ancient vessel, a retired coastal pleasure craft, had been anchored in the mud of Old Woman's Bay, and there used as shelter for the construction workers who built the base.

The old gray vessel was floated across the bay to the repair docks, and received a "going over." She was found to be in better condition than at first believed, but even so, after some rather expensive repairs, she later came near being the death of about half the 45th Battalion. Crews of our workers were set to work upon the old pleasure ship, tearing out and renewing those parts that could not be patched up.

While other work was being done, Commander Smallwood, now in charge of the Regiment, with Commander J. P. Roulett in command of the Battalion, set artist Robert G. Garrity, to painting a map mural on the bulkhead of the main deck ladder-way. The scene depicted represented the map of Alaska and the Aleutians, with picturizations of various items of which particular regions were noted . . . brown bears on Kodiak Island, seals on the Pribilofs etc.

In mid-August, as a trial run, the S. S. Yale was sent on a round trip to Attu. She took with her Seabees who had long made their homes on Kodiak. Evidently, the old vessel behaved properly, for soon she was groomed for another trip out the islands. This time she was to take along the Tanaga Detachment of the 45th Battalion!

The scheduled sailing day proved to be a beautiful one,

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windless, and without clouds. Since it seemed to have been established custom to depart a base only on days filled with storm, we were skeptical of this rainless date. However, we found everything in order for, though we had our gear packed since early morning, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, we were ordered to unroll our bedding and spend another night ashore. And next morning we went aboard ship in the rain!

D-Company, being last on the muster, was last to go aboard. By the time the trailing platoon had arrived on the dock, all staterooms and the better bunks had been taken by those ahead. For us it was canvas cots in the corridors, along the companionways, in the grand salon, on the fantail. Just why the muster could not, once in a while, be reversed, and the last men be first, on occasion, is not known.

Not all of the battalion was leaving Kodiak at this time. Later a detachment went to Sitka, where roads had to be built under severe odds of terrain and weather. The balance of the battalion followed A, D and half of Headquarters Company as far west as Adak, and were there to meet the Tanaga Detachment on the first step of its return to the States.

Late in the afternoon of first day of September, the Yale pulled away from "Permanent" Pier, and headed down the bay. The sea gremlins that seemed to have had nests in the old ship, announced themselves even before we got free of the harbor. Due to having to await high tide, the Yale's hook was ordered dropped. Not only was the order obeyed to the letter, but the attached thousand foot of heavy chain went over as well! Seemed the winch gave way as the anchor started down, preventing the crew from stopping its run until the chain tore loose and fell into the sea!

Since the Yale had been a passenger ship plying the west coast of the U. S., she had been quite a palatial tub. Her interior furnishings were of the best, her elaborate ornamentation was of the sea; plaster forms of lobsters, dolphins, sea horses and shells, inter-mingled with seaweed and coral, framed

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the ceiling panels of the main foyer. Even the wrought iron railings along the balconies and stairways were designed to carry out the marine motif, being formed of conventionalized mermaids, lobsters and Neptunian tridents.

The dining room was on the fantail, lower deck, and the troops aboard had more "class" in the manner and service than they had had before, or since, on troop ships. The mess line came down the stairway, moved along a serving counter, then to circular tables scattered not too closely about. The mess hall was good enough for even the officers of our battalion, for they ate at tables reserved for themselves, served by the colored Stewards of course.

As Kodiak island faded into the night, and with supper eaten, the troops found places of more or less comfort on canvas cots in the companionways. There they made merry with music and singing. Sam Musser was induced to render a few tunes on his guitar, assisted by C. B. Stephens, the versalist, who could do something of everything. W. W. Chaney and Robert Couture gave with the violin, and all joined in with the singing. Thus we passed the time until lights out and call to quarters.

For one good lungfull of night air, Harold Garrity, Ed Wiley, and I, took one last turn about the upper deck, finding the rain still falling, and the sea, now that we were in the open water, getting rough. "Well, Donahue," said Garrity, as we turned in our cots, "We're on our way!"

By the following dawn the Yale was pitching and tossing in an unpleasant manner. I sat on the edge of my cot for a moment to dress, only to have my head begin to whirl. My feeling of good health left me in a wave's rolling. I lost all interest in breakfast, nor did I stir from my foyer bunk the balance of the day. Next morning, however, though the water continued to run rough, I found myself freed from the dread malady, nor was I again bothered by it until, nearly two years later, when I began another trip westward (to Okinawa).

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Though the waves continued to rush between the various island groups we passed, the Yale rode them like the veteran that she was. For a time it looked as though our "gremlins" had left us, but by midday they again appeared. This time in the form of a gasket blown from the head of one of the ships boilers. A few hours later, a second boiler gave way! At greatly reduced speed, the ship made its way to Sand Point, on the Alaskan Peninsula, and there put in for minor repairs.

By late afternoon we were underway again, still at reduced speed. Fog hung over the island groups we passed, but occasionally, through breaks in the mist curtain, we glimpsed mountaintops, snow covered and high. Beyond Unga Island we saw the slopes of Mt. Pavlof reach into the clouds. For hours, as we steamed along side its great bulk, we peered through the gloom overhanging its summit, trying to make out the crater of the volcano. Then, as though in our honor, the weather gods brushed aside the cloud curtain long enough for us to not only see the crater, but to watch the great puffs of black smoke, that, every ten minutes or so, shot out into the sky. Twenty minutes later the cloud again obscured the spectacle, and we saw the smoker no more.

Just before dark we passed Unimak Island, and in through the Pass by the same name, to find ourselves on the Bering Sea. By this time four more of the ship's boilers had gone bad. There was the constant danger, too, that others would go. The Captain then decided to put into Dutch Harbor for more permanent repairs.

By the time we reached the vicinity of Unalaska, it was too late to enter the harbor through the nets, so the ship, at greatly reduced speed, moved about on the sea. Those of us who dared the winds and waves to venture out on the decks for air and looks around, often saw blinker lights stabbing the darkness from mountain top positions. It was evident the Island Command wanted to keep an eye on us, for, the truth being told, we were outside the protective submarine nets, and

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would have been "easy picking" for any lurking enemy submarine.

The water was green gray with the dawn when I noted a pilot boat coming out from the harbor. She came alongside, the pilot climbed aboard, the pilot's flag was run up, and we started in through the lead to the harbor. We were first through the gates that morning. Just ahead of us we watched the net-tender vessel swing wide the float supported netting, and give us the all-clear signal to proceed. Soon we passed the famous Pulpit Rock, ancient land mark for all seafarers going into, or outward bound from Dutch Harbor.

As the Yale was pushed alongside the docks at the foot of Ballyhoo Mountain, so named, we are told, by the famous story writer, Jack London, a Navy officer stood on the docks and shouted in surprise.

"Well, I'll be damned! If it ain't the old Yale! Never expected to see that tub away up here. Why I've spent many a dollar and many a night on that ship!"

Turning to a man nearby, the officer continued, in a voice clearly heard by those of us who, watching docking operations, had lined the rail. "She used to run up and down the west coast between Frisco and Seattle. Later they made a sporting ship out of her, and took large parties out beyond the prohibitory range, where everything went; and the sky was the limit!"

When the Yale was securely tied up at the dock side, her fires were drawn. Ship-fitters were then screened, from the muster list of Seabees aboard, to make repairs to the boilers. Work was to be rushed through by a complete change of workers every 12 hours.

Those of us not on duty were permitted to go ashore in our dungarees, or Seabee greens, to take much needed showers, purchase articles from the Ship's Stores, and give the place a looking over. Some went to the movies, some to the beer parlor, and a few of us visited the station library, which, by

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the way, was an excellent one for such an outlying outpost.

Always interested in the history and geology of any place I visit, I dug up facts about Unalaska and Dutch Harbor that I did not know. Seems the town of Unalaska, on the island of the same name, was in pre-war times, the commercial center of the Aleutians. The town, established between 1764 and 1770, by Solovief, of Russia, was called Iliuliuk. The island is the second largest of the Aleutians; 67 miles long, with a very irregular coastline extending in a northeast-southwest direction. The highest point, Mount Makushin, has an elevation of over 5,000 feet. It is an old volcano, with a crater nearly 2 miles across, and between 300 to 500 feet deep. The greater portion of the hollow is filled with ice and snow, but, due to the subterranean heat, certain parts of the floor are snow free. From these areas, large quantities of sulphur have, in recent times, been mined.

Dutch Harbor, Navy and Military Base of the United States, is on a nearby island of Amaknak. It lies so close to Unalaska that the arm of the sea dividing the two seems but a river. Travel between the two bodies of land is facilitated by a small cable ferry.

Repairs to the Yale's boilers were not completed that day, (Sept. 4) nor the next. In fact, due to the misbehavior of the weather gods, were destined never to be completed by us. But our repair crew worked without interruption until late on the night of September 8, at which time such a storm was blowing that the job was called to a halt for the time being.

I aroused from slumber once or twice that following night, and realized a high wind was blowing, but thinking the boilers had been repaired, and we were underway, I snuggled into my blankets and slept on. When morning came, I was aware that water was dripping from the ceiling near me, and that the ship, for the moment quite stable, was listing to port. Also I was aware of a terrible clamour outside, sounding as though many hammers were beating on iron drums.

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Hurriedly pulling on my foul weather gear, I rushed out on deck, to find such a storm raging that I could scarcely see across the harbour.

Ballyhoo Dock was hidden in the wind-driven spray and high waves broke against the ship, now fast aground on the harbor spit. Without asking questions, it was easy to figure out what had taken place. Especially so since the "niggerheads" and tie bits were seen to be snapped off at the deck plates, and the broken ends of new 2-inch manilla lines were seen to be unraveling in the wind.

A williwaw evidently had sneaked over the mountain with such force the old Yale, still without power, was broken from her moorings, and sent drifting across the harbor. In an effort to hold the ship, both anchors had been dropped, but, save entangling the subnets, were of small value to the storm driven vessel. There was nothing the crew could do but let her drift, taking along her collection on net floats. And drift she did, until she piled on the spit.

Fortunate it was, that the ship went aground at low tide, for with the return of high water, the vessel righted herself. Had the situation been reversed, the story likely would have been quite different. As it was, when the fury of the storm had abated, tugs were able to pull the old ship off the spit, apparently little the worse for her adventure, but still wearing her garlands of hollow steel floats.

The captain, though he likely did not intend it so, in commenting on the storm, gave the Seabee passengers a bit of credit. He said, "It was certainly a trying time for we officers and crew! We were drifting toward the spit, our hooks dragging. It looked curtains for us. We were frightened, I'll confess, but those goddamned Seabees slept through it all!"

However, that afternoon, divers reported the ship's screws and rudder were bent, with repairs out of the question for the time being. Cable cutting barges came along side and cut the entangling strands of steel wire from the anchors, using torches

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for the task, one anchor requiring five separate cuttings to be free of its entanglement. The harbor men looked at the Yale's broken rails and the battered condition of its superstructure, and shook their heads. Consequently we were somewhat prepared, later, to be ordered to abandon the ship, before the day was done.

All the gear we had stowed in the hold had to be taken out. Every man-child had to gather his things about him, and go ashore for an indefinite stay. We were ship-wrecked sailors, for a fact! Some even talked of the 30 day survivor's leave usually granted to men who survived a stricken ship!

For the next two weeks we were quartered in twin storied barracks on Amaknak island, about a mile and a half from the Naval Air Station. The time passed quickly, since there were many chores to perform, such as policing up the areas, assisting with the Base galley and messhall, and stevadore labor to perform when Navy ships came in.

John Alexander, Riley Singley, and I, were away at every chance we had, exploring the island, or digging into the various Aleut kitchen-middens to be found over the region. The middens on the harbor spit held most of interest. First, because they were handy, and secondly, because they seemed to be more richly embedded with ivory implements of Aleutian manufacture and use. We had company in our excavation labors, for a good part of the detachment, with whom we traveled, began to do some digging. The first thing we knew, orders were published forbidding further earthturning on the spit!

We, then, were forced to rove farther afield. From evidence we uncovered, there were many village sites about the bay and inlets of both Amaknak and Unalaska. One group of 45th Archeologists returned from a twenty mile boat trip bringing several small skulls that had been dug from the soil of a small island in the bay.

Early in the afternoon of September 16, there appeared, out of the fog over the Bering Sea, a large gray ship. We watched

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it come in the passage between the sea and the spit, swing around, and tie up at the Ballyhoo docks, from whence the Yale had been torn some weeks before. This was normal procedure of many such ships entering Dutch Harbor, but this ship held more than the usual interest of Seabees, for we had been told we were to hitch-hike a ride to Adak on the President Monroe . . . and this proved to be that ship!

Our last night ashore on Amaknak was one of joymaking. Being Seabees, we were a restless lot, and looked forward to traveling on to new adventures. Everything was packed in seabags and duffels, some men even had their bedding rolls done up, preferring to sleep on the bare springs of the wooden bunks than to take the time on the morrow for bed rolling. At one end of the big barracks, a group clustered about a dice game. Farther down the room "Little Monte Carlo" was in full swing, money changing hands in rapid succession. While from down below, on the first deck, came guitar strains of "Little Brown Jug," "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and other favorites, as "Priestly" Priest, "Kid" Rohr, Sammy Musser, Bob Couture, W. W. Chaney, and others did their various bits in the celebration.

Late that next morning, in a rain storm, (of course), as we went up the Monroe gangplank, we were handed little tickets that informed us we were "excess baggage," and that, owing to an already crowded condition we were not to expect a place to bunk, or to find facilities for eating. It was hoped we'd "bear with the situation with understanding."

A few were fortunate enough to find bunks, but the rest of us that first night slept where sleep overcame us, be it in the companionways, under the ladderways, or on the tables in the mess hall. For meals we were lined up and given a boiled egg and an orange for breakfast, a spam sandwich and an apple for noon meal, with two boiled eggs for night chow.

This would not have been so bad had we not had to pass, in mess line, slowly along a way looking into the officers

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mess, where we saw those gentry being served all manner of juicy steaks and other choice foods. It was only natural such a condition aroused a resentment that steamed to white heat before the three day run was over.

It was rumored that a few of the Battalion officers remonstrated at the scanty fare given the troops, and their efforts brought about an affair of fistcuffs. What truth there might have been in the story likely was small, but it gave us a measure of satisfaction to think our plight had been called to the attention of others who might have remedied things.

We pulled into the harbor at Adak, beside the battered landing barges that had been used to invade the island a few months before. The metal, flat bottomed boats were still piled upon the beach, where fortune had cast them when their use was over.

Being unannounced hitch hikers, there was no place on Adak prepared for our coming. It was evident we wished to quit the President Monroe as soon as possible, so we went over the sides on cargo nets, let over the rails, and went aboard one of two LCIs tied to a nearby dock. The usual "snafu" resulted, for it was the farthestmost vessel on which we were supposed to spend the night. The net result was that we slid down a slippery gangplank to the nearest LCI, walked across the vessel, and onto the second. Here we were assigned to bunks in the tightest quarters we had previously seen. The bunks, three tiers high, were so close together that one could not even sit up in them. One had to lift the body to a horizontal position and slide in edgewise. There was no place for gear, so we piled it anywhere and climbed over it at every move.

We had no idea we would get any supper in such a place, so the "procurers" of the outfit began to look about. In a forward locker a small keg of strong yellow cheese was located. Then a sack of very hot red onions. In no time at all each man in the forward hold was eating cheese and onions. When we had eaten all we thought we dared, we heard chow call

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blow! We trooped up the ladderways and onto the deck. Sure enough, chow was being served to a line that formed around the vessel and passed through the ship's galley. In the darkness we ate baked beans, a slice of pineapple, and drank a cup of sugarless, creamless coffee.

Next morning, September 21, we were ordered dockside with our gear. After what seemed an eternity of waiting, trucks came to take us inland. In snow-squally weather we were hauled about twenty miles in open vehicles, to a group of unheated Quonset huts, atop a hill, overlooking Andrew's lagoon in one direction and the Pacific Ocean in the other.

Here we were given canvas cots, upon which we soon unrolled our mattresses and blankets. The cots were placed so close together there was no walking between them. When going to bed it was necessary to crawl over the bunk end. But it all was much better than life aboard either the Monroe or the LCI, so we were quite content for a while. We ate a late supper that night at a large mess hall down the hill about a half a mile from the huts. The meal was excellent to our tastes, and we were permitted seconds when they were desired. With a warm meal, and a good one, under our belts, we all felt as though life was not so bad after all, even though several of us slipped into unseen bogs, and water holes, while going through the darkness back to the unlighted huts.

The tundra here had been worked into a thin batter by the passing of many Seabee feet. At every step the brown mud reached to the ankles, producing sucking sounds as men trudged back and forth. Morning light revealed a small caterpillar tractor buried in the mud until only its top was visible. How it ever buried itself so deeply, is a mystery. And many hours, with many timbers, driven in the bottomless ooze, were required before the machine was out of the muck.

Singley and I set out after breakfast to explore the Pacific shore below us. As we walked along over the spongy mosses, reindeer and other species, it was like trying to walk on a soft

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mattress . . . and very tiring. Some of these mosses grew so tightly together that they, in patches, seemed to "burst" upward like wood paving blocks that had become watersoaked. Some of these "explosions" extended a full eighteen inches above the surrounding moss tips. There were various hues to these mosses. Some areas had a yellowing bronze tone, others were deep green, while some had a grayish appearance, and we found some that were decidedly maroon.

The season was late for flowers, but we found the flower stalks of a species of land orchid, the seed heads of wild geranium and monk's hood. The cottony heads of Alaskan Cotton grass were so common in certain spots their whole appearance was that of a field of daisies in bloom.

We came to a lagoon-like lake, and began to skirt it to see what possibilities of ancient village sites it might possess; Singly, of course, being more interested in archeology, and I in Natural History. In the tide margins, of the lake, we found many jelly fish of various hues. Some had a bluish or brownish tint. Others were of a rusty red, but the brightest hue was found on several six inch jellies . . . a hue of light red wine!

Crabs of various species were found along the pebbly beach, many of them wearing a whole armor of barnacles, overgrown with algae. "Those crabs," said Singly, turning a particularly barnacled chap over with his toe, "makes my back itch." I had to agree that to look at them, left a rather uncomfortable feeling on me also.

We were going along a rise of ground flanking the ocean when my friend, walking to my left, shouted. "Here it is! Here's another Aliut village site!" Presently he found a sharp stick and began to dig. It was not long until the usual telltale shells and bones were uncovered. Knowing his interest in such things, and that he would likely be at the very same spot when I came back, I left him to his find, and set off to see what the wild beach offered me in the way of other interesting things.

Within the tide area I found a great windrow of rounded

WE BECOME "YALE MEN"

granite boulders, some about the size of basket balls, others big as barrels and larger. At first glimpse there seemed to be a mystery hidden in the shape of these rocks, but, after listening to the growling rumble they produced when the wave swells came in, it was simple to understand. The very water itself, surging both inshore and out, lifted the ground the rocks, one against the other, in a tireless, never ceasing action.

Scattered among these acres of wave-ground stone "water-melons" and granite "balloons," I found all manner of flottage. Giant kelpweed whips (stems) were so intermingled with orange crates, water-soaked logs, and spongelike creations of limestone, that, under the spell of the breaker's continual roaring, and the grinding growl of the undertow, it seemed to envelop my thinking with confusion. Almost, I felt, I had to steady myself with my walking stick to keep my balance!

Moreover, dodging in and out, under and around these spray washed boulders, winter wrens, no larger than those at home, played hide and seek with the Aleutian savanna sparrows and myself. And, apparently resting on a low bank of clouds, across the bay, Great Sitkin's steaming volcano, seemed to indicate a serenity I did not feel.

Was this all a dreamed-up mirage? No, it was real as hay! I had but to turn my head to see my archeologically-minded friend busy at his digging, or to look still farther to see against the side of a high, green mountain, the silvered patch in the mosses where a bomber had crashed, some months before!

I was brought back to earth, so to speak, by my contemplation of the presence of the many logs to be found along the beach. Since there are no trees on the islands west of Dutch Harbor, save those man recently planted there, it must be these battered, barkless logs floated from the Asiatic mainland, or even from brown Nippon itself.

There still being no duty for me, and my interest in the new land unabated, John Alexander and I, the following day, went along the shores of Andrew's Lagoon. From observation and

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study, we decided the lake had been formed by the waves themselves damming off an arm of the sea. This damming, in fact, was still going on, for millions of tons of debris and flotsam were still being brought in and piled up.

Here were more of the rounded boulders, many more spherical than I noticed on the Clam Lagoon sea coast the day before. In fact, the whole dam was underlaid with them, as proved by their presence on the lake shore side, and by excavations for gun pits. Also in the rank grasses that covered this wall of earth were to be found decayed trunks of trees, storm-thrown in their present positions from the waves.

On the side of the bay-like cove, the rocks were huge and often water-worn. But these did not get the full effects of the external movement of the sea, nor did they grind against each other in an audible manner when the swells came in.

Here again the winter wrens were abundant. Bald Eagles, too, were to be seen. Several of these big birds watched our movements from towering pinnacles of conglomerated rocks, nor did they fly when we walked beneath them.


John and I traveled by the mountain goat style of leaping from one rock to another, intrigued by the scene we felt sure we'd see around the next bend. Sometimes we followed slippery and precarious trail-footing around spray-wet embankments, working our way upward on certain areas, only to be compelled to descend farther on, until we were scarcely out of the waves reach, as they broke against the rocks.

Since the way back was the same as we had taken out, we decided to cut up over the hills and cross the island to our camp. While I doubted we could get up the slope, I remembered John's success in scaling old "Matterhorn" back at Kodiak, so I set out after him.

We had to give it up however, for we were slipping back two feet for every one ascended. We returned to our "goat" trail, and followed it back to the Andrew's Lagoon, and so to our huts.

Chapter 6.

TANAGA: OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE

EPTEMBER 23, FOUND US in line before the supply tents, being issued sleeping bags. They were fine things costing our Uncle Samuel, I have heard, nearly forty dollars each. And while we "beefed" a bit about the extra gear we had to lug along, we were later to bless the warmth and comfort that these rayon-lined articles afforded us.

The bags were double, one lighter bag, feather filled, was inside a larger cotton filled one, and each one was closed with a zipper. But it was soon found that one bag was sufficient except in the coldest weather. Roll about as we liked, we never became uncovered, and for me, I was spoiled in that I nearly froze when I had to turn the bags in, and sleep under the old fashioned blankets.

These sleeping bags had one drawback. They had no removable inner lining that could be taken out and washed. We crawled between the same cloth surfaces every night for several months, which, to my way of thinking, was most unsanitary. However, on the rare days of sunshine we, when we could, spread the un-zipped bags on makeshift lines for airing. An extra improvement, too, would have been waterproof covering, which the issued bag had not.

Plans for further journey had gone on apace. Already the Liberty ship, William Lloyd Garrison, had departed with the first contingent of our men for the small island of Tanaga, some sixty or so miles to westward. And lying in Kuluk Harbor the LST 451, was being loaded with our belongings, lumber and

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other articles for which we would have need in the months ahead.

Late on the afternoon of September 24, the last of the "Tanaga Detachment" went aboard the LST, and by dark the ship was well out in the Bering Sea. There were no accommodations made for us, but the cavernous hold was ours for the finding a place on the metal deck for our sleeping gear. A single row of men found space along either bulkhead, and double row down the center. This left but two aisles by which one could make his way forward or aft. These passageways proved too narrow when, later, the sea grew rough, as more than one stepped-on sleeper could testify. Nevertheless, with consideration for the crowded condition of the ship, and the entire lack of support or guide rails, there were few casualties of consequence. And when minor accidents did occur, such as slipping down the steel ladderway, or tripping over cables, there were always the skillful ministrations of the "keepers of the sick bay," Chief Andrew Dulick, Frank M. Lockhart, Edward N. Auken, Otho Hon, and George M. Link.

September 25th, was a day of dense fog. The sea was of the same hue as the mist above it, so much like it in fact, there seemed no dividing line between the two. Joe Rees, veteran of World War I, swears he saw a seagull dive into the water to keep dry!

Only once did the blanket of fog lift enough for us to glimpse the low island of Kanaga, as we went by. And, passing it, we entered into a perilous region of reefs. Sometimes jagged rocks, extending from the water, and, ringed with white foam, would be seen just in time to turn aside. More often, the white of the foam could be seen when the rocks and shoals themselves were invisible.

The Destroyer Escort that always accompanied our ship, fearful of losing us, would draw cautiously near for a "look-see," then fade away again in its ceaseless patrol against the prowling possibilities of Jap submarines.

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No channel buoys indicated our course here. Navigation markers, painted on rocky cliffs, often invisible, due to murky weather, until too late to be of much value, were our only aids. It took sharp eyes, and rapidly issued orders to remain clear of destruction in times such as these experienced on our third day at sea. But good fortune was with us, and the LST came through without a hole in her sides!

During periods of quiet foggy days on the sea, as elsewhere, sounds are often distorted and magnified until one's hearing becomes confused. The cause of a nearby roaring may sound thin and far away, while a distant booming may appear to emanate from under the very bow of the vessel itself.

As we slowly made our way into the troubled waters on Tanaga, to starboard, we heard an unearthly bellowing, such as might have startled the ears of Theseus as he approached the lair of the dread minotaur. It was a strange, wild sound, familiar, yet nameless, and without a key that would unlock any door in memory's warehouse.

Men on deck, stood looking questioningly into each other's faces, or peered into the fog from which direction the strange bellowings came.

"Sounds like devils of the nether world," commented Chief Oswald E. Gillow, who stood by my side. "What do you make of it, Donahue?"

I had to confess I did not know what type of animal was making the racket, but I guessed it to be the vocalizing of a herd of sealions. The guess proved to be correct, for, shortly thereafter, we were able to discern the forms of those animals sprawled on a rocky shore.

After an hour of slow movement, during which time soundings were taken every few minutes, twice with the anchor hastily dropped, we finally reached the water of Lash Bay, and stopped about a mile and a half off shore. The "Garrison" had preceded us in, and was then with her hook in the mud, dis-

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charging heavy cargo into "captain" Schuster's pontoon barge. By this method, supplies and troops were taken ashore.

The outline of Tanaga island filled the nearer horizon. It resembled, in the light fog at the time, a great, green circus tent, its canvas yardage upraised here and there as though supported on giant poles. (These elevated areas later proved to be mounds of earth that, for reasons I never learned, were carpeted by a vegetation not found on the tundras surrounding. Because they were above the marshy soil and, more or less dry, foxes dug their dens in them, and ravens and eagles used them for points of observation.)

Lash Bay was to shipping, a dangerous body of water. Half submerged boulders and jagged rocky upthrusts knifed the waves, seething, at high tide, and frothing white at low. It was no wonder the Captain of our LST was so careful in coming into the region. Though luck rode with him this time, some months later, when he tried to bring the 45th a cargo of provisions, his ship went aground and was badly damaged. However, repairs were made, and much later it came to pass, that the same vessel figured in taking some transferred 45th men to the Phillipines.

We remained aboard the LST all the following day, September 26, also the 27th, the 28th, and until the morning of the 29th—(just eight months from the time we first landed at Kodiak!) During our wait, we were a restless lot, chafing that we were not ashore. Being Seabees, though we did a lot of planning to avoid work, we detested the inactivity of "standing by."

For one thing, we never knew what hour we would get orders to go over the side. We, therefore, kept our gear in readiness, packing our belonging each morning, unpacking them at night. Sometimes storms would roll in from the sea to kick our small vessel about like a cork, or fogs would curtain us off from the rest of the world, even to hiding our companion ship, standing not over a quarter of a mile away.

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A "time killer" was found in the presence of a half grown American eagle, taken, the spring before, from a rock ledge, where it had fallen from its cliff-top nest. Despite the ship captain's outspoken dislike to having the bird aboard, he seemed to find enjoyment, along with the crew, in catching cod-fish for its food. Fishing by line, on the bottom of the bay, sometimes 90 feet down, fish, up to 25 pounds, would be brought to the surface, and hauled on board. While awaiting its dinner, the eagle would scream at the fishermen as though trying to hurry them. But when a catch was tossed to the bird, everything was forgotten while the great beak tore strips from the quivering flanks of its prey.

This eagle became a mascot of the Tanaga Detachment when LST No. 451, the vessel on which we cooled our heels, came into the harbor, some months later, and there went aground in a storm. Along with the cargo, we salvaged the bird, and kept it about camp until the following spring. We then had three mascots; "Oscar," the eagle, and two dogs, taken as puppies, when we left Kodiak, "Jealous" and "Kodiak."

Rain was falling, on the morning of the 29th, as we brought our gear topside and slid it down a taut tarpaulin into a tossing LCM. Over and down a rope ladder, we climbed, packing ourselves and belongings so tightly in the open-top landing craft that we were scarcely able to move during the trip to shore.

At eleven o'clock the LCM grounded, and we ran with our gear, through the waves to the beach. On orders, we piled the duffel bags and other equipment on the wet sand, barely out of the reach of the waves at high tide. Rain fell all day, and when we went to get our belongings that night, we found many of the bags actually sunk in the sand, their contents stained a light brown by the muddy water.

The first man I met when I stepped ashore was Phillip Couture, father of Robert Couture, previously mentioned. (This father-son team remained together until the battalion was decommissioned the following June, after it had returned to the

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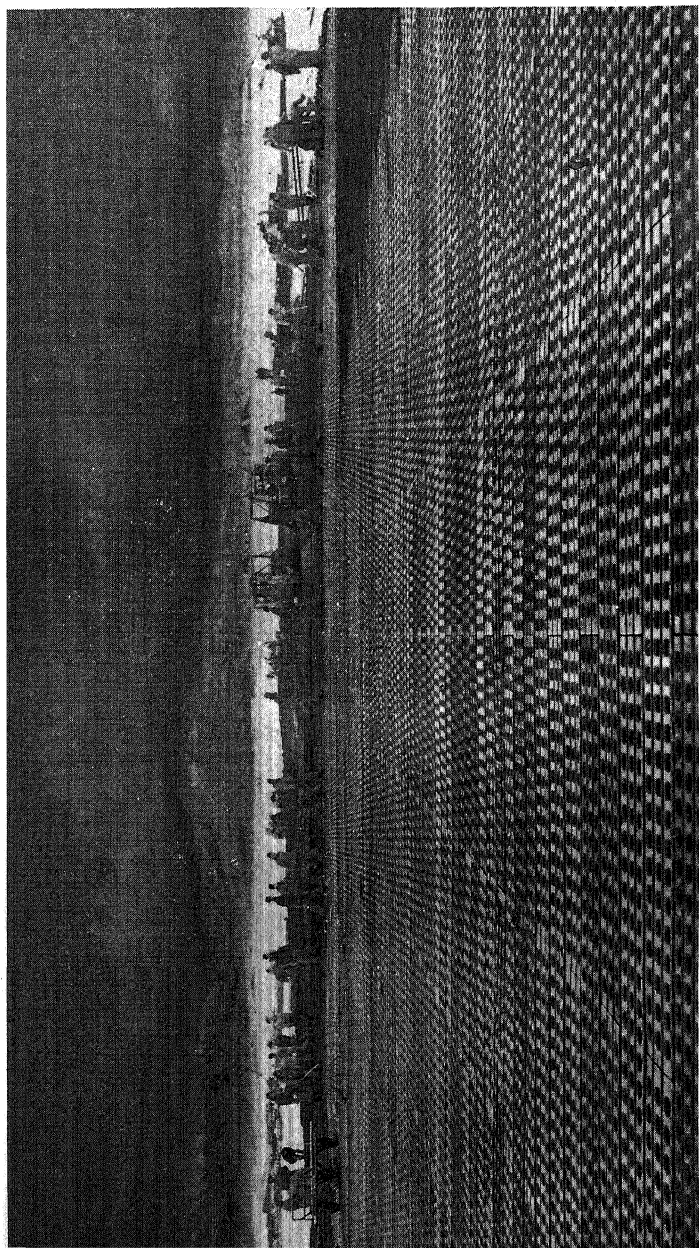
States.) Both men were black from soot of the camp fires, and muddy to the hips from slouching about in the bottomless tundra muck. And both thoroughly provoked that, though the men had to be content with K-rations, the officers had gone out for warm meals to the ships in the bay.

In the seeming confusion of the jumble of men and machines, boots and bulldozers that were heaped upon the beach, it was seen the thread of much planning ran through it. Under Lieut. A. H. Klein, Battalion Supply Officer, the boxes and crates of foul weather gear were being stacked along the first ledge to the left. Perishable food was set inside several tents, hastily erected. A Sickbay tent was established with corpsmen in attendance, and the battalion doctors, Commander R. G. Stuck, and Lieut. E. H. Hutton within calling distance.

To add to the pandemonium, the staccato whirring of air drills came down from the great nob of rock overlooking Lash Bay. There, men under Ensign C. N. Olson, and Chief Frank J. Boswell were busy getting ready to blast rock for use on the inland roadway.

The mess tent, temporarily set up, was a beehive of activity. To Chief Commissary Steward, James M. Griffin, fell the duty of preparing as good a chow as facilities and means at hand could supply. With consideration of the project that was his, that of preparing food for five hundred weary, hungry men, dumped, as he was, with no supplies save that which was brought with us, the men all agreed he performed wonders. Though we had to eat our meals outside in the weather, which, at this season of the year, was usually rain, with the consequent thinning and chilling of both soup and "java" before we could partake of them, at least the galley was out of the water while the food was being cooked.

Another very busy man was Chief Edgar V. Davis. To him went the worry of keeping the heavy equipment in operation and repair. In the primitive means available, at the time, this



One end of the Tanaga Island Plane Runway. Under most trying conditions of terrain and weather, the 45th Battalion of Seabees constructed this project in less than scheduled time. Truly a tremendous undertaking.



Navy Photo. Taken March 28, 1944, showing the construction of the dock in Lash Bay, Tanaga Island Alaska. Many of us had returned to Adak before this dock was built.

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was a task that would have turned a stone man gray. Yet Davis came through it apparently little the worse for wear.

The site of the permanent camp had been surveyed a half mile inland, in an area protected, somewhat, to the northwest, from the storms, by a steeply rising hill. The terrain between this site and the beach, was typical of Tanaga, a moss covered acreage that, under the stirring given it by countless booted feet, turned into a quaking morass. Since no vehicles could travel across this marsh, it fell to us to carry on our backs, everything from the beach-tent flooring to metal tent tops.

For a brief spell we had the service of a weasel-like "amphib-jeep" to aid us, but, after about ten trips across the muck, the vehicle broke down in the midst of a mudpuddle in such a position that we, with loaded backs, ironically, had to pass around it!

A hasty chow was served those of us who had recently come ashore. Then we were set to work. But, shod in low cut Navy shoes, as many of us were, it required but one round trip to the camp site and back to the beach to render such footwear utterly useless. Not only water flowed into them, but mud and moss! I appealed to my commanding officer, Lieut. Ricks, who appealed to the Supply officer, who ordered the Supply chief to order his assistants to break out the rubber boots and overshoes. From then on I wore knee boots until I was issued Artic four buckle overshoes.

All afternoon, we worked, slipping, sliding, sweating. At supper, I was tired to a frazzel, and, as I ate my crackers, soup and beans, I looked forward to crawling into my sleeping bag for a much desired night's rest. My weeks of inactivity had left me soft as cotton.

But I found Fate had other plans for me! Since, as yet, there had not been enough tents set up in which to shelter the whole detachment for the night, and since the work needed done, anyway, it was decided one group would work while the other group slept. Straws were drawn to select those who would continue

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working the night through . . . and I had to work!

My friend, Singley, also lost his night's sleep. After supper, the two of us teamed up in our own work, the first being the movement of sixteen foot two-by-tens to the camp site from a stalled half-track trailer a half mile away. By midnight, we thought we could go no farther, but a short rest and snack gave us a "second wind," and we returned to the grind.

Towards morning the sky cleared, and for the first time since coming into Lash Bay, we saw the stars. With the appearance of the celestial bodies, a chill took hold of the lower areas, forcing us, though tired to exhaustion, to increase our strides to keep warm. As we walked back to the lumber supply, we usually talked on astronomy, archeology, or kindred subjects, but there were many minutes we slogged on in silence.

At first we made five round trips an hour, but with the weariness creeping up our legs, when dawn was near, we were making but three. However, Chief LaVerne Cutter was also worn out, so did not press us to greater speed.

On the day marked on the calendar as September 30, I slept in my sleeping bag until late in the afternoon. Some ten of us were thus sleeping side by side on the wooden flooring of a tent. The deal was to get up and out of the "sack" without falling over or stepping on one's slumbering mates. But stiff and sore though I was, I managed it, treading only once on George Swearingen's ear!

During the night that ran into the morning of October 1, we worked twelve hours in a downpour of rain. By morning I seemed to have lost control of my feet, and went stumbling about like a drunk man. I do not believe I had worked so hard since I was a boy on my first day on the haying field. The following night, however, due to altered orders, we were permitted to quit our labor at midnight, and did not have to return to work until the next morning. Thereafter we labored 12 hours every day, seven days a week, until the camp was in working order and the runway well along.

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Though we were to be later assigned to a numbered tent row, and a Company street, we had a good group together in our first tent home on Tanaga. Singley was MAA, with Frank E. Manuel, Edgar J. Trader, Albert D. Whitaker, and myself as the complete muster.

The following week, during the re-arrangement, and according to a plan formulated in the Company D office, the following men were assigned to tent S-7, and, in it the group lived, more or less harmoniously, until time to leave the island. Both Phil and Robert Couture, occupied the tent, as well as Howard R. Crowell, Edwin H. Cunningham, and myself. When the Coutures were sent back to Adak, toward the end of our stay on Tanaga, Joe Harrison, and Carl Holmberg, took their places.

For a couple of weeks or more I worked on the Camp Maintenance crew, under Chief C. R. Box, (Later Carpenter), then went out as a helper for Ernest Duffield, and Ross E. Stoltz, carpenters, building the weather observation tower, on a hilltop overlooking both Lash and Tanaga Bays. While this helper job was quite heavy, it gave me a chance to get out of the confines of the camp—a thing I was longing to do—to better acquaint myself with the island.

The rare sunshine, on the second day of this new job, afforded me a chance to see that Tanaga possessed two volcanos, one flat topped as a table, and covered with snow, the other broken topped, and steaming, the upper areas of which, due to internal heat, were snowless. On yet another bright day, from the same position, I saw Mount Garaloi, riding, gemlike in the clouds. From its peak tall columns of white smoke or steam arose to form the images of various objects on the earth. (Garaloi is an island volcano, some twenty miles off shore from Tanaga.)

Under the driving personality of Fred R. Brown, Chief Carpenter's Mate, our camp mess hall took shape. It was a large, wood framed building, covered over with heavy canvas. On the 9th of October, we were privileged to eat our first meal

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under its protection. It was a pleasure, indeed, to once more sit at tables out of the weather, and to eat at our leisure. With the coming of the cold, however, due to the accumulation of moisture beneath the canvas of the roof, and subsequent showering down upon the tables, a second tarpaulin had to be installed beneath it to keep our clothing dry at mealtimes.

Four quonset huts were erected in camp, one being our "head" and shower, one our Sick Bay, one our Battalion Office, and the other our Recreation Hall. To make the camp more "home-like," the heat from the big generator supplying the camp with power and light, was now enclosed. On clotheslines, put up for the purpose, in this tent, the wet wash from our eleven Thor washing machines was hung to dry.

Since the washing facilities in the shower room were so limited, and the weather so bad clothes would scarcely dry when hung outdoors, the drying tent was the beginning of a regular camp laundry that soon was in operation. Chief Edwin Coshow, was put in charge. Veteran laundryman, Homer Legris, saw to it the wash was done right. Master of the washroom, and engineer of the eleven washing machines, was Clarence O. Pettitjean. Ex-policeman Frank King and Richard Johnson assisted in the drying room and waiting on the counter.

At a later date, following a week in the battalion hospital, I was also put into the laundry, at which job I worked until I left the island by PBY, early the following March.

In addition to my various tasks on Tanaga, by mid October, I was assigned to the 50 caliber gun crew that took care of one of the guns in a pit overlooking Lash Bay. Each day, except Sunday, I quit any work I might be doing at 4 P.M., and went to my gun post. There, in company with Joseph J. Lambeseder, Omer L. Evens and Jimmy Wright, we took the gun apart, and inspected it for evidence of rust. Then we cleaned and oiled every part, making sure it was in working order before putting it together again. At various points around the island, gun emplacements were set up. One, high over Tanaga Bay, had a

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permanent crew standing by at all times. All gun positions were connected to the Battalion Office, by telephone wires strung along the tundra. It is remembered that once when Commander Roulett wished to check on the Tanaga Bay outpost, he called by phone. Evidently there had been some bantering going on between that point and the office, for the lad who answered the call thought the Commander was some one else, and proceeded to respond to an order with, "Go jump in the lake," or words to that effect.

Needless to state, there was considerable embarrassment felt when identification of the caller was established. The Commander, then and there, made it plain that, henceforth, there was to be no more skylarking over the gun pit phones. "Or there'd be some changes made!" he said.

Though we were prepared for any enemy attempt to invade Tanaga, and were continually on the alert for signs of the Nips, it must be related here that not once in the whole 16 months we were in Alaska and the Aleutians, did we see a live Jap soldier or sailor out of captivity.

The first snows of the Aleutian winter came sweeping across Tanaga on the afternoon of October 26. It was a wet snow and clung to the sides of power poles and hut walls. By night it had all melted. But from then on the wind-driven flakes came thick and fast until the whole island was white . . . a whiteness that remained on the ground until the following spring.

In the construction of an airplane runway on Tanaga, the preparations of the tundra for its coating of sand and subsequent capping by steel mesh, was a gigantic undertaking. The site selected, some 8,000 feet long by 200 feet wide, reached nearly across the point of land separating Lash Bay from Tanaga Bay. For the most part, this area was comparatively level, but two fair-sized hillocks had to be removed. There was, also, the matter of draining two small lakes, and the filling of their beds with sand.

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Under normal conditions, a power shovel, of even medium size, would have made short labor of the earth mounds. Trucks would have hauled the excess soil away, dumping it, with little lost motion, into the dry lake beds. But on Tanaga, as has been previously stated, conditions were far from normal.

For one thing, by sad experience, it was found that the unsurfaced, undrained tundra would neither support a motor vehicle, nor permit it to travel under its own power. The roadway, now slowly lengthening from its start on Lash Bay, where the soil was so like liquid that it swallowed, at first, even the larger boulders dumped upon it, would not be ready for many days. Time was too limited to wait for the road!

After some official head scratching at quickly called meetings of those whose duty it was to get the runway completed on schedule, it was decided that matt-supported draglines would not only have to pare the hills down, but would also have to remove the dirt. Now this was quite a large order, for, with the limited reach of the dragline booms, some of the earth would have to be picked up and set down no less than four separate times to get it clear of the leveled strip.

Undaunted at the task assigned them, the dragline crew, Tom H. McKee, M. G. Leonard, and Edward E. Roehlk, each in a slow, cleat-tracked machine, set out across the quaggy tundra to the scenes of their assigned labor. Movement was on wooden matting, placed and replaced by the dragline booms, as the machines went along. It should be chronicled here that, despite the magnitude of the task, the hardships encountered, and though it meant long, tiring hours in all kinds of weather, the leveling job was done in time for the pouring of the sand bed.

The draining of the lakes too, was quite an undertaking. The area was so level there was no immediate place in which to run the water. However, under John Webber, who engineered the placing of strings of dynamite sticks in the mucky soil, later exploding them in such a way that ditches were formed in a

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twinkling of a dew drop, the water was weaned away into a ravine that ended in the bay.

As the water level went down, it was discovered the lake teemed with tiny fish, (later identified by Dr. William Beebe, of New York, as 3-spined sticklebacks). Also there were a few trout, one big fellow, a cutthroat, measured 18 inches in length. How these fish got a start in these isolated tundra lakes is somewhat of a mystery unless, as some have suggested, they were brought to these waters by waterfowl, possibly the birds carrying the fertilized eggs on their feathers or feet.

When the runway area was connected in an interlocking system of drainage ditches and canals, previous to pouring the sand, the water flowing along the bottom of these ditches, swarmed with these little lake fish. They nibbled on the rootlets extending through the water, and flashed their silvery sides, when frightened, like the shiners in the States. Some of them, in addition to the triple spines on their backs, had twin, v-shaped spines attached on their undersides just back of the lower gill openings. These spines were so placed that they could be used to scoot the fish forward through the tangle of rootlets in the water, or bring them with speed in from the shallows.

In the weeks that followed the completion of the intricate system of drainage ditches throughout the runway area, the road, leading inland from Lash Bay was completed. Not a small project in itself, the yardage required to "float the road on the quivering tundra" was something to ponder upon.

First, huge blocks of stone, blasted from the Bay's headland cliff, were dumped on the site. When these boulders sank into the ooze, others were piled on top of them; the process being repeated until a more or less solid road foundation had been established. Then broken rock and coarse gravel were piled on in sufficient quantities to level to a grade. Over this a layer of sand was spread. With side ditches dug, and culverts in place (empty oil drums, with ends cut out, welded end to end

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as drains) the result was pleasing to look upon, and practical to all purposes for which it was built.

A good deposit of coarse sand was discovered near the beach, at a point not far from where we first landed. It was not long until a power shovel was scooping this material into an ever waiting line of heavy trucks. The runway required sand! and plenty of it! On some sections, especially near the lake beds, the depth needed was well in excess of four feet. Day and night the trucks rumbled past the camp, the day crews racing with the night crews to maintain a record of most loads hauled. Even the giant 15 yard earth-moving pans, drawn by bulldozer-cats, were pressed into service, and through fair weather and foul, added their rattle to the general roar of activity.

The completed runway was a "must." Time was everything. Labor and cost no object. Whatever else may be said of the Battalion officers, they used available equipment to its best advantage, and not only completed the runway on schedule, but ahead of schedule!

When the time came to lay the steel matting, every available man was put to work. Men in the office who had never done an hours outside labor since the battalion was formed, were to be found, parka-wrapped, and booted, but doing their part in putting the matting in place.

Otis Thompson, D-Company clerk, was there. So was William E. Gillespie, Raymond L. Haffey, Charlie Cross, A-Company clerk. Even Robert G. Garrity, artist and steel worker, and Everett F. Bradley, were numbered among those who hurried the project to completion.

Capping the climax, so to speak, was the appearance, on alternate days, of members of the censor board. John Alexander, A. O. Petersen, and Dean K. Sanders carried and distributed the heavy steel sheets along with the rest. (John Corbett and Leo Roberts, recently ill, were the only men excused.) The Ship's stores loaned help; the Carpentry shop all but closed down, its help out on the runway. The Laundry and the

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Armory went short handed. Yes, even a few of the officers, including the Chaplain, forgot military dignity long enough to lend a hand. Indeed, it was a time of work!

With the laying of the last mat, and the first plane to land, the tempo of the camp on Tanaga slowed a bit. Skis were put on and tried upon the many slopes that surrounded us. Being inexperienced in the art of using the tricky things, several men of the battalion found themselves in the Sick Bay with sprained ankles or broken legs; our dentist and one of our doctors were down with fractured legs during the same week! Out of sheer protection of battalion personnel, it was then decreed that, henceforth, there would be no more skiing!

Chapter 7.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEABEES



WHEN OUR CAMP ON TAN-aga was fully established, and the job of preparing the site for the runway well along, we were pleased to read the announcement on the bulletin boards that the seven day work week had been reduced to six. At first, there was much jubilation over this announcement, but it soon was learned that half the day off was to be used in Military Instruction.

Indeed, since leaving Kodiak in the first days of September, we as Seabees, had gone without any M. I. whatsoever. That we had grown rusty, we all knew, but we howled to the limits of the island when we found that half our day of rest had to thus be "wasted." Nevertheless, we complied, and on bad days, which were in predominance, we, by companies or platoons, assembled in the Recreation Hall to listen to a re-reading of the Articles of War, or methods in the use of first aid, etc.

Lieut. F. A. Wood, one of the best loved officers in the battalion, was one of the instructors. Assisting him was Lieut. W. H. Mitchel, Military Officer of the Tanaga Detachment. When the weather permitted, Chief S. D. Wagner, veteran of the first world war, took the men down the road to Lash Bay beach. There he drilled them in the various phases of the firing range, bayonet fighting or close order marching.

Because of the nature of their jobs, the Camp Engineers were the first to learn the ins and outs of Tanaga's contour and shore line. Under the supervision of Carpenter R. R. Lawson and Chief Chester W. Haenny, the surveyor crew could be seen, early and late, upon the wide tundra reaches, a bundle of stakes

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on one pair of shoulders, a rod on another. Sometimes they would be strung along the snow fields like beads on a string, at other times, they moved in a body; but seemed always to be on the go. Quiet men, they were, seldom mentioning the geography observed and measured, but groning, at times, over travel aches and pains.

Members of the Tanaga Surveying crew comprised the following names: Charles Loucks, G. G. Sheets, and David Worsfold, Statistical Expert of Los Angeles, Calif.

To those of us more or less tied down with near camp duties, the lot of the surveyors seemed the most desirable job on the island project. At least, it did to me, who loved to explore. I vowed I'd pull a few strings either to get on Chief Haenny's crew, or find other excuses to get away. For some reason my name was not considered as even an engineer's assistant, so I had to carry on with my sorting job in the camp laundry!

But, on the few times I had a part of a day off, I went to see for myself what lay beyond the hills toward Tanaga Bay. Often, on my lone trips of exploration, I would meet other battalion members, likewise roving. Not infrequently, I met Everett Joseph, Joseph J. Lambeseder and Gilbert E. Haanz. They too, chafed at camp boundaries and regulations.

While the "Call of the Open" had a peculiar fascination for the ears of both Riley Singley and myself, we, at first, answered its summons for different reasons. To Singley, the archeological possibilities of the island were paramount; geography and natural history being held secondary. With me the order was reversed. Nevertheless, my friend's zeal, together with his success in uncovering some splendid relics of the island's former people, aroused my own interest to such an extent that it was not long until I was digging beside him in the rich brown earth.

Now it must not be inferred, however, that I had supplanted ornithology with archeology. Even though my eyes were intent on the contents of shell heaps my spade upturned, I did not forget the presence of animated life about me. Often rosy

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finch alighted on the newly stirred soil and, robin-like, searched the out-thrown debris for edible possibilities. Or winter wrens, working through the rank reed grass from the beach, would pause on cow parsnip stalks to turn wondering eyes upon me as I knelt in the dirt. Sometimes I would be startled from my contemplations of how the ancient Aleuts lived, by the sound of roaring wings, as flocks of white or brown ptarmigan rushed overhead, often clearing the grass tops and my head by inches.

And the emperor geese, as flocks of these northern birds slid down the erratic winds of Tanaga, always announced themselves by low voicing that, somehow, warped itself through the rumble of the surf on the rocks below. Always this sound would take me from my gopher-like burrow under the beach grass roots. And, likely enough, before reassigning myself to my labors, I would scan the skies for eagles or ravens, often spending additional minutes in watching the aerial acrobatics of the island's largest birds. No. I remained, first and last, in interest at least, an ornithologist.

According to the Ethnology report to the Smithsonian (1945), the Aleuts, inhabiting the chain of islands reaching westward from the Alaskan peninsula to Attu, were of two groups, speaking slightly different dialects. The Unalaskans occupying the western end of the Peninsula, the Shumagin and Fox Islands, and the Atkans dwelling on the Andreanof, Rat, and near islands.

Also, so reads the report, when the Russians reached the Aleutians in 1740, they found nearly every island inhabited. Aggattu then had 31 villages, Unalaska had 24, and there were numerous settlements on the other large islands. But during the following hundred years, the native population diminished until, on the entire island chain, there remained less than 2,000 individuals.

With this documentary evidence, together with such other information as Seabee archeologists uncovered, Tanaga once had a population of Atkans, the exact number, of course we do not

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know. However, in the more or less restricted areas that were ours to explore, Singley and I discovered four different villages sites; one on Tanaga Bay and three on the land surrounding Lash Bay. John Alexander and D. K. Sanders, at liberty from censorship duties for a while, found the largest and best preserved site of all, some five miles away on South Bay. Undoubtedly, there were other sites to be found on the unexplored (by us) coastal regions to the south and west.

The location of an ancient village site was not a difficult undertaking. When there appeared a sheltered area of sea water, an arm of the sea, or a tiny bay, protected from the storms by a spit, or other natural windbreak, and the adjacent land was bisected by a fresh water stream, it went without saying that a bit of digging would uncover evidence of a former dwelling place. Usually too, the areas were more or less mounded and pitted, well overgrown by strand wheat, and topped by taller stalks of cow parsnip or wild celery.

Sometimes, as on the site at Tanaga Bay, the waves had eaten into the mounds until the shell and bone content of the middens is exposed to the destructive action of the water. But in the greater number of instances, from 18 inches to 3 feet of earth covered even the latest shell strata. Due to the fertilizing nature of the middens, no doubt, the soil surmounting them bears an abundant vegetation, but at Ikiwikki, (a name I gave to an ancient site) the ground, for reasons I do not know, was devoid of this plant life. It has been suggested, in the light of what we found, that this lack of plant life was indicative of more recent native habitation.

Articles of archeological value were found with just enough frequency to keep the student digging. Always the digger felt his very next shovel full of earth might reveal the trinket for which he looked, or a strange and rare artifact be uncovered that would throw new light on an old, old subject.

Climatic conditions, together with possible mineral content of the island soil, must have good preservative properties, for

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the long buried kitchen middens were in a fine state of preservation, though some, no doubt, had been buried for hundreds of years. In fact, in this connection, certain writers maintain that there is ample evidence to substantiate the conclusion that these island areas were inhabited as long ago as 2,000 years!

Be that as it may, it is certain the shore lines of Tanaga were known to Aleut hunters and fishermen long before the Russians brought to the natives the white man's religion and civilization. In all likelihood, the hut clusters, or some like them, to which we gave the name of Foxboro, on Tanaga Bay, and Beebeton, on Lash Bay, were in existence before Columbus talked the queen out of her jewels and ships, and came westward on his first Atlantic crossing.

The huts of Aleutian natives were semi subterranean affairs, not unlike, in many respects, to the early day "dugouts" on the Kansas plains. From measurements of old hut-pits, made on the spot, it was found that the greater number of huts were smaller than ten feet square. Some were as small as five by eight feet, though these may have been used as storage bins. One big community house, at Ikiwikki, measured 16 by 20 feet!

The Aleut contractor, if such a man existed, began his house by digging into the soil to a depth of three or four feet. After this "basement" had reached the required proportions, rafters of arched whale ribs, or drift wood, were placed above it. Next came the "sheeting" of the stalks of the rank Indian parsnip, or other weeds, "shingled" by grass, and overtopped by a layer of earth. Entrance to the huts, or *barabara*, as the Aleuts called them, was made by a hole left uncovered on the roof, or at one end.

Though much of the Tanaga native diet consisted of raw flesh, it has been reported that steamed or cooked foods were no stranger to them. And, while there was evidence found by us that indicated the huts were equipped with primitive indoor stone-stoves, it is to be supposed that, weather permitting, most of what cooking was done was performed out of doors.

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In several of the hut sites Singley and I dug into, we came upon skeletons of human beings. One small spot at Ikiwikki, contained two such skeletons, one buried 24 inches deeper than the other, and, from evidence presented, had been buried many years previously. Whether by design, or accident, these two skeletons, though placed one above the other, were arranged so that their skulls were toward the center of the lodging, the foot bones of one to the east and those of the other to the west.

At Beebeton, I found, buried among the shells and bones of a midden, numerous human bones, more or less in order. Of this skeleton however, I found only the skull, shoulder blade, arm and hand bones of one side of the ex-body framework. Even the lower jaw bone, disengaged from the skull, was found 18 inches away from it.

Implements of the chase, spears of ivory, bone and stone, were frequently found among the various strata of earth and shell, fish bones, bird bones, and skeletal remains of seals, walrus and sealions. Needles of sharpened albatross wing bones, net-mending and weaving tools of walrus ivory, fish harpoons of many barbs, together with stone scrapers and fleshing knives with remarkably keen edges, made up the archeologists bag of trophies.

While Alexander, Singley, and I went for the digging of relics in a determined way, there were many in the battalion to whom these Aleut souvenirs were nothing more than that. Those who were interested enough to accompany us on one or more of our trips, were as follows: Homer G. Legris, Kenneth Ross, Robert and Phil Couture, father and son, Albert Witgenstein, Ray Crowell, Edwin H. Cunningham, Clarence Petitjean, La-Verne Cutter, Chester Haenny and Dave Worsfold. Even the battalion Chaplain, Lieut. E. F. Shumaker, was present one afternoon during some earth turning.

The finding of a natural cave on a small island off the coast of Tanaga, gave battalion archeologists a field day. It was evident the cave had been used in more recent times, (within

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the past fifty years or so) as a tomb for native dead. Several skeletons were uncovered near the top of the floor-dust, showing unmistakable evidence of having once been wrapped in grass matting, woven skilfully in three different weavings. But there also was evidence that the cave had been used as a dwelling many, many years before, since the litter on the cave floor was four feet deep, and contained many artifacts of an earlier "culture."

When November passed into history, her brief snow flurries, that had been dividing the day into patches of light and storm, not only increased in number, but in intensity and duration. Though the island was one great snow field, set among the breaker-rocks of the beaches, there were still minutes during the day when the sun broke through. At such times, aided, no doubt by reflection of light from the surface of the snow, the sky and air assumed a radiance that seemed unearthly. Distant objects appeared near, and near objects assumed unusual shapes. Tanaga mountain and her attendant volcano, which reached skyward from the yonder shore of Tanaga Bay, appeared to be but a stone's throw from the runway's end. And Garaloi, like a steaming silver cone, seemed to be floating on the green water of the Bering sea!

The temperature slid downward at night, too, spreading an ever thickening sheet of ice over the small lake from which the camp drew its water. Since the weather on Tanaga was something of an "unknown quantity," some apprehension was felt lest this ice extend to the lake's shallow bottom, thus cutting off our entire supply. But our fears proved groundless in this respect, for though the water below the ice was needled by ice ferns and lances, they did not join together in solid freezing.

The pump house, on the shore of this lake, was, for some weeks, the only break in the rolling tundra. Keeping a steady day and night watch on the pumps, a man was always in attendance.

More than once, while enroute out of camp, or on my return

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after a trip of exploration, I'd swing by this hut and warm myself while chatting with the attendant. Sometimes I'd find my "Iwegian" friend, Ed Wiley keeping the fire going, and giving the panting machinery careful attention. At other times Harold Garrity, Chicago Cocktail Lounge keeper, would be busy at writing letters on the desk provided for just such purposes. Or Charley Foltz, busy at reading some magazine, would look up to give me a cherry word of greeting as I opened the latch of the hut door.

Our Battalion larder was replenished by supplies brought over from Adak on board LST's or Escort Destroyers. There were times, when storms delayed the coming of these ships, or prevented them entering Lash Bay, once they came near, for weeks at a time. Then did we learn how slender rations could become. Sometimes it would be potatoes we had to do without. At other times it was bread. Occasionally we did without meat, as meat, eating it for days in the form of hamburger or meat loaf. A few times even this staple was missing, and canned beef served to stay our appetites.

There were not a few times, according to Chief Commissary Steward Griffin, that he cast appraising eyes on the ravens that flew over, or even the dogs and foxes that were about camp. Hungry seabees are desperate men, the chief well knew, so he was only doing some desperate thinking for possible eventualities.

But Father Neptune, or the Storm Gods, it seemed, always relented before we had to kill the camp's mascots, or snare the birds from the skies. By some manner of daring or means, food supplies and coal in gunny sacks would be brought in in the nick of time. Then we'd dine royally for a day or two in an effort "to catch up" with our eating, and revel in abundant heat, from coalbins filled to capacity. We even hoarded a few sacks under our tent floor against the coming of another lean spell in Sibly stove fuel!

A word of praise should not be omitted for the sturdy men

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who manned the pontoon barges on the Bay. To bring supplies from ships, standing well off shore, they often dared the stormy water. The stormier the day, the farther out stood the supply vessels, and the consequent increased danger in contacting them.

Once in a blue moon a skipper, more daring than the others, in an effort at speeding the unloading of his ship, would venture near the rock-fanged beach. A few such men got away with this trick. But not all.

There was a day when an LST, loaded with carryalls, bulldozers, and other heavy equipment we needed to complete the runway, came into the Bay. She anchored near enough to the shore so that, when the big doors were opened, the vehicles in her hold could be driven directly off onto the land. At the hour the gray vessel came in, the bay was like glass, the sky clear and bright. But scarcely had the first "dozer" reached terra firma when a wind whipped the waves into a lather. The big ship's sea doors winched shut, hatches were battened down, and the task of the stevedores, for the present, came to an end.

As night came on the storm grew in violence until the LST's mooring cables snapped, permitting her to drift helplessly. Swinging around, she swept broadside fast aground before the men ashore were more than aware of her danger.

By morning the waves, now overtopping the masts, had worked such damage the big ship was something of a wreck. Her screw and rudder were in the air, her bow deep in the sand. The task of unloading her cargo went on as soon as the weather permitted men to be out in it. A line was fastened to the mast of the LST, and carried ashore where it was anchored against the high rock bluff flanking that point. Over this line, breechesbuoy-fashion, box after box, barrel after barrel was swung to the beach.

On board the LST there were no means of bringing gear and cargo topside except the freight and tank elevator platform. From there the cargo either had to be carried by brute force, or, handled as the 45th Seabees did it, from elevator to rail, by

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rigging a short boom hoist on a jeep, on the deck.

With the cargo removed, preparatory to tugs pulling the ship off the sand, it was decided to further lighten the vessel by jettisoning its oil ballast. Now, oil on Tanaga was something quite precious, and the thought of dumping such a commodity into the sea actually made us ill!

So Lieut. Floyd H. Simon, in charge of waterfront operations, assured the skipper of the LST, Lieut. Harry A. Swartz, that, given a little time, he would have tanks to hold the oil. There were no such containers available on the island, so the crew of carpenters built them of panelboard on the beach. Into these improvised receptacles, the thousands of gallons of oil were pumped, (some 40,000 in all!) The saving of which, gave us many weeks of oil heat for our snow-bound tents, ordinarily warmed by coal.

For the help the men of the 45th Battalion were able to render the skipper of LST 451, Commander J. P. Roulett, received a Commendation from Rear Admiral F. E. M. Whiting, USN, under date of 25 January 1944. Special mention was made of Lieut. (then Chief Warrent Officer) F. H. Simon "for his untiring efforts and practical assistance."

Other men mentioned as being of special service to the salvaging operations of the LST were as follows: Vane C. Baker, Carl Louis Anderson, Robert J. Vickrey and Harold E. Kane. The special commendation stated: "In order to dewater the shaft pulleys and flooded compartments aft, it was necessary to construct timber patches for the holes in the bottoms of such compartments. This work was done in compartment half filled with water and foul with vegetable gas. These men are commended for their skill, efficiency and devotion to duty."

But the 45th Seabees were getting used to Commendations by this time. Previously, a Commendation had been received for the efficiency and skill the men and officers displayed in preparing a floating drydock for a rough trip from Kodiak to Adak. Though the weather had been bad, the 45th men lopped off

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five days from the estimated schedule of work. The project was completed on 7 July 1944.

The following list of men worked on the drydock project, and so share in the commendation, a copy of which is included with their service records.

Ensign H. B. Gilroy was in charge. Working under him were the following men: V. C. Baker, O. L. Mullich, G. A. Heller, P. R. Grace, C. L. Anderson, A. J. Bagnoli, S. J. Blechschmid, F. E. Burns, Vern E. Caven, Clarence C. Connolly, Donald L. Deegan, Earnest Duffield, Rex E. Duncan, Ambrose Evans, Otis L. Falana, Otto H. Feldman, Gustav Gorna, Lloyd R. Haltom, Charles H. Hoevelkamp, Robert J. Kenny, John H. Kerwin, Franklyn J. Kessen, Wilbur L. Lee, Clair K. McDougal, Clifford W. Murphy, Wayne F. Neal, Daniel C. Prescott, Charles L. Robinson, Edward A. Rupert, John A. Stach, Lester C. Summerall, Bedell A. Tippins, Robert J. Vickrey and James R. Waggoner.

A third Commendation for the Battalion was received January 27, 1944, when the main runway project was completed nine days ahead of schedule. A fourth was given for the rescuing, by breeches buoy, the crew of a net tender that had been forced upon the rocks of Lash Bay during a winter storm. 49 officers and men were thus saved from the rock strewn waters which, under the conditions, could hardly have saved themselves. The story:

The net tender, under the command of Lieut. D. B. Howard, left Adak on the 25th of February, 1944, and proceeded to deliver some supplies for the Tanaga Detachment of Seabees. She put into Lash Bay that evening, but due to the darkness and stormy weather, stood well out.

Early on the morning of the following day the tender came in, the Captain intending to anchor as near the shore as possible. But, while yet a 1,000 feet out, his vessel was sharply pinned onto a boulder, and tilted perilously with her bow in the air.

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At first it was thought the vessel could get off the rock at higher tide, so no distress signal was sent to the Seabees on Tanaga, though that body of men were keeping eyes of watchfulness on the stricken ship. But it was not long until the waves began to roll and batter the tender until it appeared in danger of sinking.

Then a line, was shot to the shore and there made fast to high boulders. A "Cherry Picker" was brought out to raise or lower the line as the improvised breeches buoy went back and forth to bring in the crew. The line swung so low, at times, especially when the ship would roll landward, it was often drawn through the swells. At such times the men on the buoy were soaked to the skin.

Then as one of the ship's crew, G. E. Thornton, was riding his precarious saddle, the line parted, pitching him into the water. To swim in the current that seethed about the exposed boulders so characteristic of Lash Bay, was impossible. It looked as though his chance of survival was nill.

Now among the men on the beach, who were doing everything possible to aid in bringing the crew ashore, there were Chief Paul R. Grace, Chief John A. Clifton, and James J. Donohue.

Without awaiting orders, when they saw the line part and the crewman fall into the water, Grace, Clifton and Donohue pushed a row boat into the surf, rowed out through the rocks and picked up the floundering man. How they managed to escape destruction is a wonder to the men who watched them from the beach. One blow against a rock would have demolished their cockleshell boat in a twinkling. There too, was the ever present danger of being swamped by the waves. But their heroic deed paid off, for they returned with the man they went to save, none the worse for their adventure.

Later, when most of the Battalion was assembled again at Adak, Paul R. Grace, John A. Clifton and James J. Donohue were awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal "for extra-

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ordinary heroism" beyond the call of duty; an award that all agreed the men had rightly earned.



The Author in Seabee "greens" after a long hike into the timbered hills of the island of Kodiak. Picture taken in front of the Battalion Office, on the banks of Sargent's Creek, Bells Flats, Kodiak, Alaska.



From left to right: H. H. Plyler, C. O. Schenk, and H. F. Mertens. Two of the 45th's three Photogs., and one of its artists. (The artist in the center). Edwin Caster, the third photog. not pictured. Photograph taken on Tanaga.

Chapter 8.

ADAK, SEATTLE, FRISCO!

FROM THE VERY FIRST WEEK of our landing on Tanaga, Herman Mertens, newspaper man from Omaha, tacked up about camp, typewritten sheets of news he picked up over the radio. Under the banner "Tanaga Times" he gave the troops daily postings of the progress of the war, or otherwise made announcements that more or less kept the Tanaga Detachment "up" on world events.

During the latter part of November, upon the Merten's "Sheet" there appeared news that held more than ordinary interest for me. It was the announcement of the sinking of the Escort Carrier, Liscombe Bay, in the battle off the Gilbert Islands. According to the report the staunch vessel was sent to the bottom by Jap torpedos. Now the sinking of any United States vessel was serious enough, but my brother, Harold, was a member of the crew on the Liscombe Bay! To make the incident still more depressing for me, Radio Tokyo began to blare into the airwaves that the carrier had been sent to the bottom in such a few minutes that the loss of life included the entire crew.

Hoping against hope that my brother somehow managed to escape. I was greatly relieved, December 23, to get a cablegram from him, sent to me from a hospital in Honolulu, telling me he was alive. Later word brought me the information that he was one of the few men who were saved when the carrier went down. Injured in the legs from being blown overboard, my brother never again left the states after he was ordered there for duty. (But it was not until the first of the year 1946 that

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he was discharged. His rating was then, Chief Aviation Carpenter's Mate.)

So it was that the Christmas season found me not unhappy, either in mind or heart. It was the third wartime Christmas I had been away from home (including the one in 1918), but my brother's rescue was such good news, I would not complain of any hardships.

No mention of the camp at Tanaga would be complete without writing of the splendid service the big generator rendered us. Shortly after the tents were up along the company streets, power and light lines were installed. It was but a few days until the coughing of the big machine announced its starting. From then on, day and night, under the supervision of Chief George Foot, the tundra quivered as the diesel motor turned the generating engine, sending the so needed light and power coursing through the wires above the snow.

Radios began to blare in the long night. Motors in the Carpentry shop began to turn. Life about the camp took on a more civilized air, thanks to "Big Ben," the mighty electricity maker. Even Dr. Allen was able to discard his foot treadle tooth grinder for an electrically spun gadget of oral torture. Not only did the generator supply power for the camp, but its cooling system supplied hot air for drying the laundry, as has been mentioned previously, and power for the big reefers.

The standby crew who tended "Big Ben," under Chief Foot, were as follows: R. J. McDonald, Martin Munley, Clovis Hart, and George Berlin. One or more of these men were in attendance 24 hours a day. Usually they had little to do save make nicknacks such as knives, ash trys, etc., but when "Big Ben" misbehaved, as he sometimes did, the men worked long and tiring hours.

Since there were no trees on Tanaga, save a species of dwarf Arctic willow, the presence of which few realized, since it grew along the ground, its broad plumlike leaves barely protruding out of the moss, the need of something for a Christmas tree was

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great. The electricity crew, however having the time and the ingenuity, began a synthetic tree that not only served the purpose for which it was intended, but actually fooled the not too observant as to its true nature.

First a section of timber, about two by two inches, was planed down until it tapered to a point at one end. From this timber, branches of twisted copper wire were run, after the manner of fir tree branches. Broom straws, stained green, were wound in each turn of the twisted wire in such a manner, that, when they were bent at right angles, the resemblance to fir was remarkable. Set on a regular pedestal, and strung with streamers and colored electric lights, the effect was pleasing as well as startling. "Where, on Tanaga, did you find that tree?" was a question often asked.

The weather on Christmas eve blew up another storm. By early darkfall, snow was rushing up and down the company streets as tho seeking tents with less protected flaps that it might enter. Those men who ventured out, did so with heads bent low against the storm, usually running when ever footing was suitable.

But the Tanaga weather gods relented a little on Christmas Day, even to sending us gifts of fragmentary sunbeams. Holes briefly appeared in the canopy of gray clouds, and the winter sunshine glistened on the snow fields for fleeting moments in the afternoon. But the temperature was low, so low that a cloud of vapor gushed out the mess hall doorway with every opening of the latchstringed door.

The day of Christmas was one of the first full days permitted the men to be off duty. Many slept late that morning, missing breakfast, but every man jack of them was up and ready for the big dinner. And what a meal it was! Everything that a man could wish for in the way of food was piled on his tray as he passed along the serving tables . . . roast turkey, dressing, brown gravy, olives, cranberry sauce, two kinds of potatoes, creamed corn and pumpkin pie. Added to this were gifts for each man

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from the American Red Cross in the form of sacks of candy and cartons of cigaretts.

The holiday cheer was further enhanced by decorative bunting streamers stretched about the big tent mess hall, and—wonder of wonders—table cloths on every table! (Table cloths were sheets, freshly laundered, from the officers bunks.)

In the afternoon, there was shown moving pictures taken by the battalion Photographers, Herman Mertens, Holland H. Plyler, and Edwin Caster, of the Organization of the Battalion, and its Presentation of Colors, back in Camp Peary, Va., in November, 1942. Also scenes taken at every important happening since that time. As the editing of the color film was expertly done, and the shooting excellent, those who were fortunate enough to see it, reported it a masterpiece.

For myself, I was a member of a trio of archeologists that set out immediately after the noon meal was done, to do some excavating at the site of Beebeton, on Lash Bay. Riley Singley was one companion, John Alexander the other.

All during the afternoon, we worked like beavers, or better I should say, ground squirrels, digging the snow covered soil in search of relics. Nor did our efforts go unrewarded, for several fine specimens of ivory tools were uncovered.

By five o'clock, the day was done as far as the light was concerned, and, at the time of sundown, indicated by some red and gold shadings in the west, there swept across the island another snow storm, a regular williwaw this time, that lasted all night long and most of the following day.

By mid January, we began to grow restless. The 29th would mark the first anniversary of our coming to Alaska. The 12th Battalion had been sent back to the states after a year of duty on these islands along the Bering Sea. In fact, while we were stranded at Dutch Harbor, awaiting some vessel to take us to Adak, we visited with members of the 12th Battalion, ashore there for the night, while enroute home. So, though we were given no official promise we would be sent home soon, we,

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nevertheless, kept the thought ever before us by lively discussion as to the possibilities and probabilities of such an occurrence.

With every vessel's appearance in the harbor we would begin a half-wishful, half-joking saying, "There's the ship that came to take us home!" From the doorway of the laundry, where I worked, I could look out over Lash Bay, and keep tab, so to speak, on the goings and comings of the craft that put in with supplies for us, or came to take men off for business on Adak, and elsewhere.

Sometimes the seaview would be blotted out by the snow storms, but always we could hear the roar of the waves beating against the rocky beaches. Even above the clamor of storms, there was present the sea thunder, a more or less disconcerting rumbling sound that I found no equal until, many months later, I heard the cannonading on Okinawa.

For the first and only time in my military career (one year in the Army, and three years in the Navy) I had to turn in at a hospital. Early in January I felt distress in my upper abdomen, and answered "Sick Call" one morning for a checkup. Dr. R. G. Stuck, was the Doctor on duty that morning (he and Dr. E. H. Hutton, taking turns on alternate days) made the examination and pronounced my trouble as "Para umbilical infection." He ordered me out of my clothes and into the white Sick Bay nightgown, and into bed.

For the following three days ice cubes in rubber bottles were kept on my stomach. With the weather a roaring blizzard outside the hut, it seemed strange to be piling ice on my middle. But those were the doctor's orders! And sometimes when the hut would be shaken in the blasts like a rat in a terrier's mouth, I'd pat the ice cubes, and crawl deep into my blankets with a feeling of security never felt in a blizzard tossed tent.

After the siege of ice bottles, the deal was reversed and bottles of hot water applied . . . bottles so hot that, instead of freezing, for the balance of my stay in the hospital I was roasted! At the end of the week, however under the excellent care of Drs.

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Hutton and Stuck, assisted by their efficient aides, Auker, Hon, Link, and Lockhart, I was permitted to leave the hospital, a weak, but well man again.

My time in sick bay was not altogether wasted, for I did much reading and, after my fever went down, wrote letters to my heart's content. Then, too, I had a chance to get better acquainted with men with whom, previously, I had had little contact. As patients in nearby bunks, we talked of our families, and the hopes we had for a better world after the war.

Albert F. Smith, was one patient who was in the hospital when I entered that institution, and was still there when I left. He had been injured in a traffic accident on the island. To speed the hours he read every book and magazine that came within the reach of his hands. Kenneth L. Fawcett, driver of the big bulldozer out on the runway, was another. While at Adak, some months before, he had the pleasure of meeting his sailor son quite unexpectedly. Fawcett, for obvious reasons, had a nickname of "Spiggott," and answered to that title about as often as his own name. Dave Kalpan, was a brief visitor in the bunk above mine. James E. Hartley, one of the sprightly lights in the Battalion office, stopped by and joined our neighborly chats for a few days. Hartley was to be married shortly after ending his tour of duty, and often spoke of the coming happy event. Meyer G. Stein, a quiet lad of deep thinking, donned the white robe of Tanaga's Sick Bay brotherhood, and wore it a short time before going back into the stormy outdoors.

The williwaw that ripped across the island while yet I was a patient in the sick bay, was one of unusual violence. Shipping ran for cover, and work on the runway was halted. Over in Tanaga Bay, an Escort Destroyer endeavoring to get out of the gale's fury, struck a submerged reef and foundered. Fortunately the beach was a gravel one, and not far away, so there was no loss of life. But swimming in the icy sea was an experience not relished by the officers and crew.

Word was sent over to the 45th Sick Bay for blankets and dry

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clothes. The medicos hastily gathered together medicines, bandages and other supplies needed by their profession and, wrapped against the storm, like Esquimos, they were soon heading across the tundra.

I wanted to go along for two reasons, and had to stay behind for one. I wanted to do what I could in assisting with the first aid work, and even though a blizzard was blowing, I had a "yen" to see a part of the island not yet under my eyes. I had to stay behind for the good and sufficient reason that I was flat on my back in the hospital!

Late that evening the men on the mercy mission straggled back to camp, weary as winter and numb with cold. The services of "Dr." Auker became in great demand for a while, rubbing away chillblains, or working feeling again into feelingless muscles, he, seemingly, untiring in this work.

As to the crew members of the DE, they were given first aid and warm garments with such despatch that none was the worse for their battle with an Aleutian storm. Their ship, however, was of no more use to them or to the Navy!

Before the Tanaga airstrip was completed to the extent that planes could both land and take off from it, all mail was brought over from Adak—the postal collection point for the Aleutians—by surface craft. During spells of dirty weather there were weeks that went by with neither incoming nor outgoing mail being moved. At such times the morale of a Seabee descends to a low ebb. He becomes morose and "touchy" with his fellow mates. Maybe the continual blaring of a too loud radio will cause harsh words to be exchanged, or the scarcity of coal in the tent become an arguing point that develops into fistic encounter.

But what a difference when the mail sacks come into camp, piled high on the mail truck, and there is mail for everyone! Even mucky ditch digging was not so bad then . . . especially when the mail received was from the right persons.

With the coming of the planes to Tanaga, and the clearing of the weather, we often received mail from the states in nine

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days, which, considering the distance flown, and the various hands through which it had to pass, was not bad at all. After a couple or three days of non-flying weather, we all went about our duties, one ear cocked toward the clouds, awaiting the familiar sound of the "amphib" coming in from the east.

Mail was not the only thing flown in either. One time a whole plane load of west coast beer was brought over from Adak. And, when certain foodstuffs ran low, the needed provisions came winging out of the sky. Even coal in gunny sacks, when the need was great, was brought to us in PBY's. The officers, too, commuted to and from various other islands by plane. Commander Roulett often was called to Adak on battalion business.

The Aleutians, geologists tell us, were formed by volcanic action. Being, comparatively new, they are yet in the throes of rising and descending, according to the whims of the gods of internal stress. Our experiences on Tanaga, consequently, would not have been complete unless we were present during an earthquake. And they were complete!

The night of February 23 was one of great contending among the winds. By darkness our tents were being whipped like a tailless kite. The center tent pole beat such a jig that the deck vibrated so much we could neither read nor write. The light wire with its attached bulb jumped about so erratically that our shadows went through a regular devil's dance on the flapping canvas overhead. There was nothing to do but prepare our sleeping bags and crawl in, trusting the tent would not be blown down upon us.

During the gale, which we later learned blew in excess of 87 miles per hour, at 2:30 A.M., I was awakened by a sharp jolt that seemed to be caused by someone stumbling on one of the wires that supported the metal cap at our tent's top. I sat upright in my bunk, and yelled something about "keep away from that wire, You!" There was no answer but the roaring of the storm overhead and the waves on the beach.

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Next morning, being early to arise, I talked with night working men who told me of an earthquake that shook the island during the night. Dishes were thrown from shelves in the galleys, bundled laundry tumbled in a heap on the floor. The water line from our tundra lake water supply had snapped, and other havoc was found in the course of a morning's investigations.

A second and a third shock was felt at mid morning, but these last two were mild compared to the tremor of the darkened hours before. Not a few men from California were with us, and such things as earthquakes were "old stuff" to them, but to the majority of us, it was yet another experience we could chalk up on our Aleutian adventures.

All winter long, as we built the airstrip, I thought it would be a fine gesture to us if the "Powers That Be" made it possible for us to fly from our work project when the task was completed. "Poetic Justice," I thought. Besides I did not relish sailing back through the storm-torn, rock-filled seas, when, in a half hour or so, by plane we could be back at Adak.

It was the "luck of the Irish," as Harold Garrity liked to say, when, one day late in February, I read a notice ordering some sixty of us back to Adak, via plane. March 2, I packed my belongings and wheeled them out to the road from where a truck was to bring them out to the runway. Rain began to fall about the time the bags were stacked, so we felt certain there would be no delay in getting away, since it was in the ritual that we always moved in a rainstorm.

But we were too hasty! No truck came for the gear by late afternoon, and soaked and somewhat out of patience, we wheeled our belongings back to our tents and spent yet another night on Tanaga. The following morning we piled our bags again . . . in the rain. But this time we got as far as the runway, where three PBY's were awaiting us.

We stowed our seabags aboard one of the planes, loading them through the opening in the port "blister." Then we waited and waited. The rain turned to snow, and winds whipped

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it across the steel matting in gusts. One of the planes taxied down the runway and took off into the teeth of the storm. We thought she was headed for Adak, but presently the big machine came swooping back and landed. Once again it tried, only to return. The pilot saying as he stiffly climbed from the cabin, "Closed in again at Adak."

Finally, everything being as near perfect as Aleutian weather will permit, all three planes arose and roared out to sea. Though I should have liked to have had a spot in the blister to see what was going on below, I, being one of the first to go aboard the plane, had to move forward where there were no windows except a tiny one at deck level. Through this tiny opening I watched the island of Tanaga fade below me without a single feeling of sorrow!

There were eleven men aboard each PBY, plus their gear, and a crew of three. My gear was heavier than most Seabees for I had several additional pounds of Aleut relics I had dug from the island soil. However, there was no weighing of baggage, nor did the plane seem to have any trouble in getting away, though we were all warned to stay as far forward as possible during the takeoff.

Once in the air, it was permissible to move about. This we did to our heart's content. For a while I sat in the gunners seat, having an unobstructed view of the island of Kanaga as we flew over it. Off to our left the snowy cone of Garaloi broke through the lower layer of clouds, its upper slopes glistening white.

As I flew over the rough islands and troubled sea, I let my mind go back to World War I, when, as a private in the 337 Aero squadron, in England, I flew with various pilots in planes of that era. The Avro, Clegert motored, and equipped with a skid below the undercarriage, was as common above the English countryside as the "Jennies" were over our land. I shivered when I thought of one of those box kites trying its fabric wings over the Bering Sea, where the storms are strong, quick and vengeful.

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As Mt. Moffit, on Adak, came swimming into view, I let go my mind's grip on the first World War and took up again the waging of this, the second (and last, pray God) World War. Scarcely realizing it, we swung around the sprawling island, swept up Kuluk Bay, and landed, lightly as a ton of hay, on the Army airstrip. I was back again on Adak, and on the first leg of my return to civilization. (I hoped).

Late the evening of March 3, I was established in a tent, high on the slope above what was left of Mitt Lake, in a region dubbed, "Happy Valley." With me in the tent were quartered Charles Loucks, Frank Priest, William Giblin and my old friend, Joe Rees.

Three days later there was another rearrangement, and I found myself in a warm tent in company with Harold Garrity, Gilbert Haansz, Albert Kassner, and Morris Leines. Through the "procurement" abilities of certain of the tent population, we were able to install a fine circulator oil heater (intended for nothing of lower caste than a chief's tent,) together with the needed pipe and a supply barrel. All we had to do was carry the oil up the ninety six steps, from the bottom of the hill to our "home," and pour it into the fifty gallon barrel. Gravity did the rest.

Though mud was everywhere, and we had to wade its yellow waves even to go to the shower house and mess hall, otherwise we were quite comfortably housed. To make things even more handy, we found additional insulated wire, and with it constructed bed lights above, or near each of our bunks—the bunks in this tent were wooden, double decker affairs—so could read or write without disturbing each other.

We shared our mess hall with the 52nd Battalion, in fact, we were really partakers of its shelter through the 52nd's bounty, since that outfit had erected it. However, we made additions and improvements thereto, and later, when our neighbors departed for state-side before we did (to our sorrow) we had the big building to ourselves.

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Previous to my returning to Adak, a detachment of the Tanaga men had been ordered there to get things ready for the gathering together of the troops. The detachment of 45ers we left on Kodiak, had split up, part going to Sitka, and the rest coming on to Adak. (It should be said here, that the men who were sent to Sitka area, never again assembled with the balance of the Battalion, for they were ordered to Camp Parks before we arrived, and were on their 30 day overseas leave when we reached home shores. By the time they returned to Camp Parks we were on our leaves. And at the conclusion of this event, the entire battalion was decommissioned, its personnel sent to fill vacancies in various battalions, or to hang about Camp Parks as casuals, cursing with their last breath, the beehive known as Transit Training Units 1, 2, and 3.)

On Adak, the days began to drag for with the coming together of the organization, with the exception above noted, our minds and hearts revolved around the thoughts of going home. We were put to work at the various tasks incident to maintenance of the base. Phil Couture, now a Chief, under Chief Carpenter J. C. Cook, had charge of plumbing and steam fitting. Phil has a friendly way about him that made us all like him. He was not afraid to go to bat, so to speak, for any man he thought was getting a raw deal.

Due to my carpenter rating, no doubt, when I first returned to Adak, I was put to work re-roofing, along with others, the Fleet Post Office building. Because I was ignorant of carpentry, I was given a job as helper for men who had experience in the building trade. Though I was not exactly pleased with my task, being on the roof most of the time, I got a chance to see what was going on around me, and especially in the air, so did not fret.

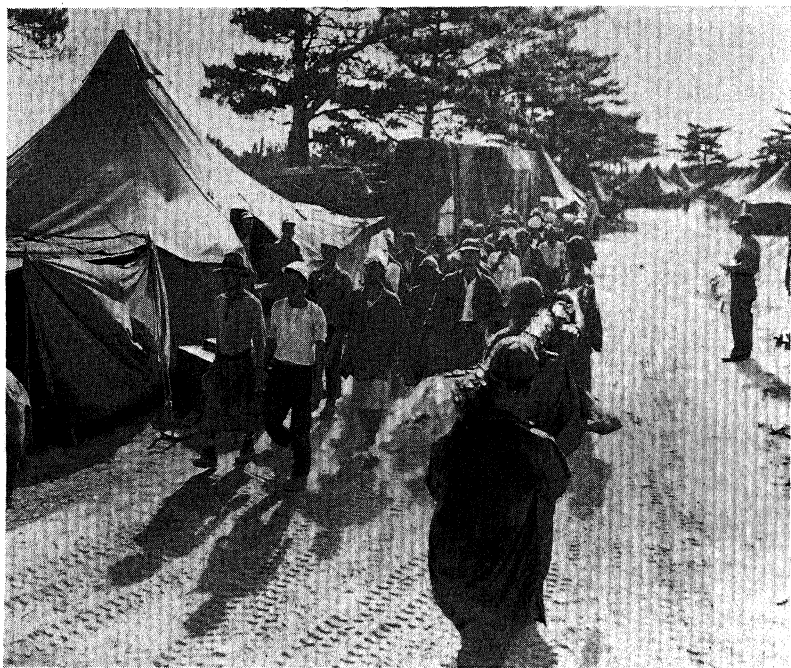
The eagles of Adak, in March, are often to be seen soaring about. Seldom, even during storms, was the sky deserted of these big birds. Once I saw an eagle swoop down along the beach of Kuluk Bay and pick up a dead crab in its talons.



THE 45TH MADE THEIR OWN CHRISTMAS TREE ON TANAGA

On a treeless island, such as Tanaga, the 45th Battalion fashioned their own Christmas tree from lumber, copper wire and green painted broom straws. The result, when decorated with Yuletide trimmings was surprisingly realistic. Men shown working on the tree, from left to right: Clovis Hart and G. B. Foot.

A R. J. McDONALD



Street scene, June, 1945, of Camp Tappin, 27th Seabees Okinawa. Pictured is a group of native workers that helped us clear the underbrush away. Bennet Young stands in the tent doorway. The author looks on from the right.

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Immediately two other eagles gave chase, sending the first into all manner of aerial maneuvers in an effort to avoid being deprived of its dinner.

High in the air above a nearby mountain peak, the trio went, dipping and swerving, to the right and to the left. Finally, the bird with the crab and one of its pursuers tangled their claws and dropped out of sight, turning around and over in their plunge. What happened to them I shall never know, for, at nightfall, they had not reappeared.

Ravens, too, I watched with interest, though here on Adak, at this season of the year, at least, they were not nearly so plentiful as they had been on Tanaga, only a few weeks before. I saw one bird, in the throes of courtship for his lady love, actually swing down, and hang limply by one foot from a telephone wire. I thought something had happened to the performer, but presently it released its hold and went sailing off after its love interest, who evidently, deciding the acting up had gone far enough, had likewise departed.

After completion of the Post Office roof, Chief Couture pulled a few strings and got me the job of "boiler watch" in a little waterfront shack where a boiler supplied steam to keep sand and gravel warm for use in concrete that was being mixed and poured in the big film exchange building. Here for a few weeks, I lived the "Life of Riley," reading and writing, when the visitors were not too thick about the boiler. This was a 24 hour job, divided into three watches of eight hours each. I had the day watch, Johnny Wonders, the next, and Joe Rees, my much traveled veteran friend, the "graveyard shift."

From the door of this shack we could watch the ships come in and dock. We made it our business to keep a lookout for a Liberty Ship, bearing the name, Marlin C. Ainsworth, because we had heard scuttlebutt to the effect that that was the vessel on which we would sail. We could not believe we were destined to remain on Adak.

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But April came and went, with no ship in the harbor for us. And every day during the month of the diamond birthstone, rain or snow fell. The rain began to wash away the snow in the lowlands, leaving only the ravines, drifted deep. The job as "boiler watch" came to an end with the completion of the costly film building, so Couture found me a job as helper on his crew of plumbers. (I knew as much about plumbing as I did carpentry, so I was just as valuable to the Navy as a plumber.)

At any rate, we worked in the mud, cleaning out sewers, building supply lines, etc. Bill Giblin, Robert Couture, Ed Wiley, Charley Foltz, W. Hoyt Baxter, and Harold Garrity were in the gang. Sometimes, due to no fault of ours, the work of several days would be brought to naught by a change of plans. Then bulldozers would snake out the buried pipe, fill, in a few minutes, the ditches we had dug long hours in the rain. This wasted effort did not lift our morale.

We believed we had been given a dirty deal in not being sent home after our project was done on Tanaga, so our hearts were not in our work on Adak. And to have to do unpleasant work under unpleasant conditions, only to find that some one erred, or had changed the official mind, and, for our all out toil we had accomplished nothing, put us in a mood that was far from pleasant.

Again I was put into another gang, this time under Chief Dale W. Ulfers. My job now was sheet metal work. I helped to erect two elephant quonset huts over on the shores of Finger Bay. I liked this change of duty, for it again gave me a chance to be out of doors and on a new part of the island, and at the same time, to be partially, at least, out of the mud.

The base laundry began calling to the 45th Battalion for help, so Chief Elbridge D. Simmons, "decider of who does what" in the office, sent several of us over to fill the need. Homer Legris, Frank King, Clarence Petitjean, Meyer Stein and myself making up the "laundry detachment." For ten

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days I checked bundles of clean clothes, receiving, for my efforts, extra pay of three dollars, which was acceptable, though money had not yet been returned to its full value in our thinking. (Out on Tanaga, save for postage stamps and ice cream—we had such a product for sale—there was little use to draw any of our monthly wages.)

But there came a day, during the first week in May when word was sent over to the laundry for all 45th men "to secure" and get back to the camp area immediately. We had a good idea what it was all about, so bid goodbye to our newly made friends, and happily waded the mud to our tents.

Sure enough, "D Day" was at hand! Men were scurrying about, turning in rifles, packs, sleeping bags and other excess gear. Even the weather, seemingly, "perked up" over the news we were going home, for it ceased its downpour for a while, and let us enjoy the far vistas of the mountains. There was action, too in the Battalion Headquarters office. Chief Douglas MacMurchy, J. W. Seward, Vincent F. Biggar, (made Chief on board the homeward bound ship), John W. Fuss, Raymond Haffey, James Hartley, Chief Robert Kendall, Chief George M. Lyon, and others, went about the manifold duties assigned to them with a far away look in their eyes.

Under such conditions, none would have blamed them had mistakes occurred, for, truly, such events as going home from war, are marked highly on the roster of big experiences. But, it remains to be said, that mistakes were few, and of small consequence. No one was left unassigned to a home bound draft.

On May 7, I went for a last hike up the slope of the mountains above Happy Valley. We were to sail on the following morning, so wanted to learn the latest about the fauna and flora of May-time Adak. As I went upwards I noted that numerous black throated sparrow-like birds were very songful. At closer study I found them to be the Aleutian longspurs, heretofore unrecorded by me in that area. Ptarmigan flushed from

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shelter before me, and went croaking down the ravines. The areas recently uncovered of its heavy snowy blanket, had the appearance of being pressed down by giant cattle at rest. The mosses and other plants would soon, I knew, shake themselves, and hurry to take what little sunlight the Aleutian weather gods permitted.

In the melted snow water pools, water bugs whirled, and tiny shrimp-like creatures flitted this way and that. I removed my glove to capture a few specimens with my hand, and found the water so cold that brief immersion so chilled it that it was numb for many minutes after. How the water creatures could stand the low temperature was a mystery to me.

As I gained the top of the first rise I noticed the soil blown away from around the wood-like roots of low growing vegetation. Sometimes, in the shallower soil, the roots and soil would be rolled into small windrows, exposing the bare gravel or rock beneath. Truly a strange place where the storms blow away even the grass roots!

I retraced my steps to camp in time for evening chow. The next meal was to be the last one in camp. Immediately after breakfast the galley and mess hall would be secured!

Our own gear had to be inspected before packing. That evening we spread everything out on our bunks, making a list of each and every article we expected to take along. (We already had the censors look over our personal pictures and seal them in an envelope we were not to open until we get state-side.) Lieut. Ricks gave our tent the once over, telling us we could pack our belongings in the presence of Chief Virgil Davis. After we had this done, the bags were tied up, and carried down the slope to a group of waiting trucks . . . all done in an effort to keep us from taking home articles that did not belong to us!

Next morning, in a rain storm, of course, we piled into trucks and went down to the docks. After some hours of waiting we went aboard the Marlin C. Ainsworth, and were

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assigned our bunks. This was it! On the way home at last!

Once again at Dutch Harbor, we stopped for a few hours, but put out to sea shortly before sundown. When we entered the Bering Sea, on the Yale, the fall before, we came through the Unimak Pass from the Pacific Ocean. On our homeward trip, by way of diversion, however, we entered the ocean through the Akutan Pass, sighting the greening island of the same name. For the next five days, over remarkably smooth seas, we were without the sight of land, but on the morning of May 15, we saw island shores to our left—Canada.

A Canadian blimp came out to give us a look over, and swung around and around our ship, signaling by blinker at each sweep. Evidentially she was satisfied we were not of evil design, so turned tail and left us to our DE and ourselves.

On the night of the 16th of May we found ourselves going in Puget Sound. Lights were ablaze all along the shore, and there was other evidence of our approach to civilization. We cheered as though we were kids at a football game, at the mere sound of a train whistle somewhere off in the darkness. It had been nearly 16 months since we had heard the familiar warning. And how we loved it!

The water of the sound fairly blazed with phosphorescence as the ship rushed through the current, sending a wall of greenish flame to either side of the prow. Never had I seen such fire that was not fire. I gazed into it for hours, fascinated by its eerie light.

The sound of train whistles, and the appearance of abundant shore lights were all pleasing, but to look once upon woman-kind was almost tearful. Save for the Red Cross girls at Kodiak, with whom enlisted men were not supposed to visit, and the women in Kodiak town, we had not even heard a woman's voice—except by radio, for so long a time we had almost forgotten it.

That first morning at the Seattle docks, a half dozen WAC's drove cars down to the ship to take off some officers, and while

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waiting for their passengers to debark, carried on shouted conversation with the Seabees that lined the dock side rail of the ship. They were good sports, and passed over the all too thinly garbed insinuations shouted to them, knowing, no doubt, the hunger that gnawed at each man's heart.

Though we were given orders to pack our gear and go the rest of the way to Camp Parks by train, these orders were cancelled after we had stood ready to debark for some hours. It was then announced that we would remain aboard, and the ship would proceed to San Francisco. So again we unrolled our bedding, and made ourselves comfortable for three more days on the sea.

Early on the morning of May 21, we sighted the towering Golden Gate bridge, and by the time we were ready to pass beneath the historic structure, Lloyd Weaver and his band struck up "California, Here We Come," a most appropriate tune at such a time. That there were choked throats in the battalion, none will deny, and some might even confess to a tear, but the war was not yet over, and the days were far too few before we would again be heading outward bound, possibly from this same Bay. So we steadied ourselves for the sight of the towering skyline of Frisco itself.

Three days after reaching Camp Parks, the last man of the 45th Battalion was swinging his duffel bag under his arm, or over his shoulder, and headed out the gate. It was 30 days leave . . . and home!

Chapter 9.

BY AND LARGE



WHEN THE S. S. MARLIN C. Ainsworth sailed into San Francisco Bay, April 23, 1944, she brought home the last contingent of the 45th Seabees. It goes without saying, that every mother's son of them was glad to set foot on home soil again. To some it was an end to great adventure. To others it was a none too soon return to a sunlit land, for, due to blows of circumstance and the weather, they had taken a beating. Despite the fact that no actual contact had been had with the enemy, there were men who received wounds, no less . . . wounds, the scars of which they will carry to their graves.

To begin with, since the Naval Construction Battalions were new and untried organizations, more or less swept together, in the emergency of war, there were bound to be, to quote an old saying, "square pegs in round holes." Not only was this so among the men of the ranks, but among the officers as well. And when such conditions exist, hardships, above and beyond those presented by normal waging of war, were to be expected.

No doubt, at the beginning of any other service organization, there was found, to a greater or lesser degree, this variance. But due to a more youthful personnel, readjustments required less time, with consequent less cost, both to the organization and individual.

With the Seabees, it was different. The average age of men who made up the first 80 battalions, it has been said, was above 30 years. Of this group there were not a few who were veterans of World War I, or had one or more sons in World

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War II. To men, nearing fifty, the change from civilian life to the strenuous life of the Seabees was a much greater burden than if they had been half their years.

Yet another factor in the "injury" to some Seabees, were the promises, expressed or implied, by the recruiting officers, to men about to enlist, promises that were not, or could not, be fulfilled. To family men, and men, who, for one reason or another, aside from their zeal to help the nation at war, had to consider the monetary side of the question, such failure, combined with the rugged "weathering" of Seabees in action, caused bruises that sometimes spread into a rash of bitterness.

Then, too, in the physical examination of prospective "bees," the usual strict Naval health requirements were waived. It has been said and with some truth, that the doctors, with more important things to do, left the routine examination to assistants who, upon learning a man was earmarked "Construction Battalion," felt to see if he had a pulsebeat and a body temperature. If one or both were present, the man was passed; if neither were felt, the assistant simply called in an undertaker!

This may be a bit on the exaggerated side, but it was proven by field experience, that many a man had been given a medical OK who was physically unqualified for the arduous tasks Seabees sometimes are called upon to perform. Quite early in their service life the men became aware of these errors, for errors they most certainly were, and, in an effort to do something about their condition, often made life miserable, not only for themselves, but the Battalion doctors as well.

That a man was a successful contractor and builder in civilian life is no assurance he had the qualities of a commander of a battalion of Seabees, a position under which his word is law even to prison and, in extreme cases, to death. While the 45th and 27th Battalions were fortunate, in the timber and quality of men who headed them, as compared to some other such groups of men with whom I had a passing acquaintance, and there

was much to commend and little to condemn, yet all was not sweetness and light.

This is not saying I could have done better, or even as well, for the difficulties were manifold, and Navy traditions had to be upheld. But there were things done, wholly unnecessary in the eyes of the men, in the carrying out of the undemocratic RHIP (Rank Has Its Privilege) that, added to the above enumerated causes for dis-satisfaction, made for a mental rebellion, dangerous to the men, and to the cause for which they were striving.

I refer to the class distinction between the stations of officer and men. Here in the States, the distinction, while none the less sharp, is not so conspicuous as when the accommodations and facilities are limited, as they usually are on remote island outposts.

The men who made up the Seabees, for the most part, were free and independent souls, previously working where and when they pleased. And, being so, did not take kindly to the Regulations that governed their conduct and controlled their actions to the smallest degree. Knowing it was necessary, in the present arrangement, at least, they submitted their freedom, and offered their very lives that the war be carried to speedy and victorious end.

In so doing, however, they felt they gave to the war effort as much as any other man or officer. And, having done so, resented to high heaven the arrangement that gave to one man the best of everything and to another only what was left. All talk of the Democratic Way of Life, of men being equal, sounded hollow to men who had to live crowded together in tents buried under Aleutian snows, while their Commander lived alone in a specially constructed, double floored, insulated tent, heated by circulating oil burners, (which stoves had a detail to keep them full of oil and burning), and the Commander had a colored valet to attend him.

They resented the rules that forbade enlisted men going

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with the few nurses, and Red Cross women who happened to set foot on Naval bases. This feminine company was rationed for officers alone. There is a perfectly good reason for this order, but the reason does not please those excluded, nor does it make for happier relations between the "gold braid" and the white hats.

The salute, despite all the hot air put forth to say it is a mark of military respect, is another regulation that brought out much bitterness among men of the Seabees. It was not, to my own way of thinking, a part of the Construction Battalions. Other forms of military life could keep the old relic of Feudal times, but for freeborn men, it is, was, and likely will be, as long as it is in force, a useless impediment, a senseless abomination for both officer and man! It should be thrown into the discard along with the outmoded, pocketless, flap collared jacket and 13-buttoned trousers!

Now I do not want to imply to my reader that I hold that officers relish the RHIP idea. No doubt there are some that get a satisfaction in being of the "exclusive set," but I have met those who disliked the "double standard" of conduct, of uniform, of rewards, food and housing, even as much as the men themselves. And I could not be an officer-hater, if for no other reason than my only son is an officer in the Army!

The 45th was organized, trained, shipped hither and yon on trains, trucks, busses, barges, tugs, planes, troop transports, LST's, LCI's and destroyers; it saw foreign duty on Kodiak, Sitka, Adak, Tanaga, Afognak, and spent time on Unalaska and Amaknak; it built pipelines, roadways, barges, fuel supply tanks, both under and above ground, built barracks, warehouses and hospitals; it drained a tundra, covered it with four feet of sand, and placed a steel landing mat upon the sand to an area of nearly a mile long by two hundred feet wide. The 45th Seabee Battalion did this within a period of less than 16 months, and returned to the states with but one accidental death to its personnel. Thus it was, through the help of other

BY AND LARGE

battalions, the islands of the North Pacific were made ready to use against the Jap. In the language of the firing range, they were "READY ON THE RIGHT!"

Ready on the Left

Chapter 10.

"THE BEE HIVE"

FOR A REASON UNKNOWN to the rank and file of the members of the 45th Naval Construction Battalion, upon their return from their 30-day overseas leave, they found themselves orphaned by a "de-commission" order from the Navy Department. The Battalion, formed in November 1942, was but a memory by August 1944, after something less than 19 months of existence.

Despite our gripes and grouching, our cussing and discussing, there were not a few of us who were unhappy that the battalion was no more. Its passing meant the separating of friends made through months of hardship and back-breaking toil.

But, like other orders we had obeyed, we could do nothing but obey this one. It was not long until the 45th men found themselves being parceled out to various outgoing units, heading back to the far places of the Pacific. Some, because of personal reasons, desiring to remain at Camp Parks, pulled the necessary straws to get permanent duty there. Others, like myself, were held there for a year or more, because of various physical defects, some only because, as in my case, dental work needed to be done.

Camp Parks, some thirty miles from Oakland, Calif., as Naval Bases go, was well enough appointed, having more than its share of ship's stores, beer parlors, recreation halls, movies, baseball diamonds, etc. But it was a base to which overseas

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battalions were sent for advanced training, reorganization, or replacement, or all three. Here veterans of campaigns the world over, were gathered together in a huge Seabee melting pot. Here men from Munda, Guadalcanal, the Aleutians, Africa and Europe, intermingled, and chafed at Stateside regulations, remembering the more or less freedom from trivia that was theirs while on foreign soil. And thus, remembering, neither wanted to remain ashore, nor go to sea again, for by going to sea they were cut off from all they held dear to their way of life. Consequently, nothing at Camp Parks pleased them.

The "squirrel cage," a name by which the Transit Training Unit No. 1 was known, was the hopper from which men were drawn to fill vacancies in various battalions. Due to Commanders wishing to keep the higher grades of ratings open as rewards for meritorious work of their own personnel, men above the 3rd class petty officers were thick on the market. And, being unwanted, these men were put on every draft by officials of the TTU-1, in the hope that one or more might "stick." The net result being a continually moving group of petty officers who grew more bitter with each round trip to a battalion and back to the "cage."

For two weeks I was a member of the 7th Special Seabees, though I did not leave Camp Parks to join that outfit, since I was rejected at the last minute of departure. For an even thirty days I was on the muster of the famous 6th Battalion, lately returned from hazardous duty in the South West Pacific. Five days I was on the list of a draft of men scheduled to go to Pearl Harbor. And any number of times I was on other outgoing units, only to be scratched at the last minute because of one thing or another, usually because the small dental work I needed done had not been attended to. Each time I was mustered out and returned, I was placed with a new group in a new hut, under new chiefs. No wonder men, under these conditions, contemplate "blowing their tops!"

Finally, due to the afore mentioned dental requirements, I

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was transferred into Transit Training Unit No. 2, a unit, to quote some of the men in charge, "filled with the sick, lame and lazy." Here I found men who were convalescent from various tropical diseases and service injuries. For a month I lived in this area, moving, meanwhile, three different times. I was put on various details of men who worked the roads, put up or took down decorations around the main gate, swabbed various officers offices, and otherwise kept busy.

Still on the lookout, however, for ways of bettering myself, since it began to look as though I would never get out of Parks alive, I read a notice on the area bulletin board to the effect that men with typewriter experience were wanted to help the Navy settle claims for damage to civilian property. The more I thought over the idea, the more it seemed advisable to take advantage of the chance.

Despite the fact that Navy men never volunteer, after they learn, often to their sorrow, that there usually is more to such tasks than appears on the surface, I presented myself before the interviewing officer. I told him I wrote with a "glorified hunt the peck system" but that I had done a lot of it. Nevertheless, he accepted me, and told me to return to my hut and have my gear ready to move on the following morning.

So it was I found myself quartered with some twenty five other men, in a badly wrecked building at the Navy Magazine Reservation, Port Chicago, California. With me was my old friend, Riley Singley, with whom I had not visited for some time. Also Cecil J. Ketner, of Washington, D. C., and Wallace Shadaker, ex-traffic policeman from Marion, Ohio. (Ketner had been on Adak when I was there, but with a different Battalion, and Shadaker, though in the Seabees, had served with the Marines on several highly contested beaches. Previous to the Port Chicago project, I had not known these men, but with them later traveled about seeing the sights of California, and so became fast friends.)

The reason for the move from Camp Parks of this special

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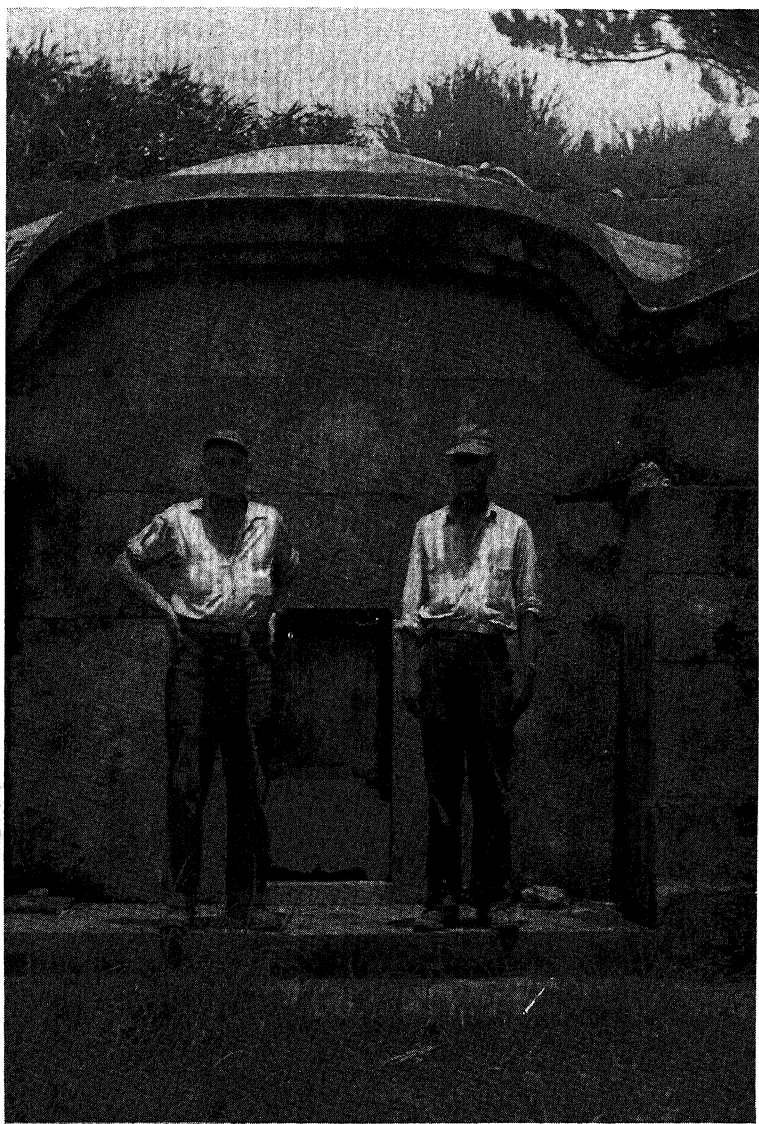
detail of "typewriter workers" was due to the explosion of two ammunition ships July 17, 1944. The ships were being loaded with bombs, mines and shells when they let go. The area around the port, for ten miles, was blasted to bits. The town of Port Chicago, about two miles back from the waterfront, was hardest hit, every building being wrecked, or so badly wrenched that it would never be the same.

The Navy assumed cost of repairs to the blasted region, and it was my job to assist in pricing the damage of window glass, paint, wallpaper, window shades, and other decoration. It was enjoyable work, and one for which I was not unfitted, since I had done just such work for many years in civilian life.

For the following sixty days I lived at Port Chicago and during that time, helped the Navy pay out some fifteen million dollars for damages to personal property in such towns as Concord, Martinez, Pittsburg and Walnut Creek. Some damage was reported as far away as Santa Rosa and San Francisco. We, at Camp Parks, on the night of the explosion, heard the sound of the blast, thirty some miles from its source.

It was with weeping and gnashing of teeth that we were told, some 60 days after our arrival at Port Chicago, we were no longer a part of the Naval Board of Investigation. We were ordered, much against our will, to return to the "beehive." Once returned, after the usual going through "receiving" we were reassigned to TTU-1! The same old routine! The same old uncertainties, stirring from one hut to another, carrying one's gear first this way and then that.

At the close of the fall season, since my officer son was to be married on Thanksgiving Day, I requested a leave of two weeks home. Had I continued as I was in TTU-1, I would have received it. but earlier I was transferred to the 6th Battalion, as I have mentioned above. Here, because we were being given special training in the carbine, machine gun and B. A. R., the Commander refused to let me go. Then, the following week, after it was too late to get home in time for son's wedding, I was



27th Seabees, Paul B. Kash (left) and Q. A. Schreckengaust pictured before one of the many hillside tombs on Okinawa. This tomb on hill overlooking Ora Wan, not far from Camp Tippins. Picture taken July, 1945.



Action photo (by W. E. Salmon, 27th Battalion Photog.) of the author swinging an improvised collecting net after a large *Nephila* spider on a web within the limits of Camp Tippins, near Ora Wan. Spider now in Washington Museum.

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returned to the "squirrel cage." All of which made me boiling mad.

While still fuming, I met Chief Dale W. Ulfers, of Des Moines, Iowa, whom I knew to be some sort of a personnel officer. He told me of two newspaper jobs open. One there in Camp Parks, which I immediately scratched off my list, and the other with the 27th Battalion, which was soon to leave the States.

Without delay I presented myself before the Commander, Willard G. Triest, and explained the why and wherefor. Right away he said he would make application for my transfer. By the second day of January, 1945, together with Chief B. A. Tippins, who was similarly minded, we were officially "welcomed" into the 27th Battalion. (At a later date, Robert Garrity, Richard C. Pleasants and Armin H. Schumacher, all ex-members of the 45th Battalion, came into the organization.)

Without delay I was put into Headquarters Company, mustering under Chief William Horton of Abilene, Tex., and under Ensign Donald A. Julius, of Washington. I was pleased with everything. The men in the office, the men with whom I was billited, and the chow. Once again I began to feel I had a place in the scheme of things. Once again, as at Port Chicago, I had a typewriter more or less my own, and began to take new interest in life.

During the months to follow I grew acquainted with and quite fond of those with whom I worked. George Bisenius, ex-reporter for the Los Angeles Times, and able editor of the Battalion's periodical, "The Coconut Chronicle," on the first tour of duty, was the busiest man in the office, though, due to changes in officer personnel, he was no longer editor of the "Chronicle." His new duty being to operate the mimeograph, making copies of the Plan of the Day, and doing the countless other paper work projects so necessary in present day making of war. He was also "sports" editor of the paper, and attended all athletic events.

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George T. Williams, also an old member of the battalion, was yeoman to Ensign Julius. He was a Texan, hailing from Waco, and like the others in the organization from that state, was proud of his native land. He is a young man, at this writing, so far as is known, unmarried, though while overseas, many a letter went winging back to the states bearing the address of a certain girl he called "Slipper."

Edwin C. Backes, of New Orleans, La., was the new editor of the Coconut Chronicle. On the first tour of duty he had been afflicted with malaria, and upon his return to the states had taken so much atabrine he was as yellow as gold. While on his embarkation leave, he had married a southern girl, and had to return to his outfit after but two weeks with his wife.

When Robert G. Garrity was transferred into the battalion, his artistic talent was added to the staff of the Chronicle, being assigned also as artist to Commander Triest's publicity program. Since Garrity and I had both been in Alaska, and were "fresh air friends," we were dubbed "The Williwaws," but by that name were unknown outside of the Headquarters Company.

Walter E. Salmon, Battalion Photographer, became a good friend, and together we had much to discuss of Germany and the rise of Nazism, since he had been born and raised in Germany, attended school in Italy, and went into business in the United States. He worked for a News Syndicate that returned him to Berlin to photograph the Nazi movement. Through him I learned much of Nazi ways and means not told in the news dispatches. Salmon's home is in Chicago, where his fine wife awaited his return to civilian life.

In the weeks that followed my entry into the 27th Battalion, I found little to complain about. My days were filled with writing and rewriting stories about certain incidents that had taken place during the 27th's first tour of duty on Guadalcanal, New Zealand, New Caladonia, Tulagi and Emirau. I heard so much about the events that occurred during its 23 months over-

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seas that I began to feel I had always been a member of the outfit.

To add to my interest in life and creative writing, the California Writers Club began to invite me to attend their dinners and meetings. The Hotel Claremont, in Berkeley, was the scene of the gatherings and, though the locality was not easy to reach, from Camp Parks, I usually managed to attend. Always I found enjoyment there, receiving a warm welcome by the various members. Mrs. Jessie Ross de River was always most kind, as was Mrs. Charles Keeler. And at the meetings I made the acquaintance of Miss Lola Johnson, poet, who later saw service with the Red Cross; Grace E. Sharritt, nature writer, Mildred M. McNeilly and Agnes Morley Cleveland, novelists.

With February's passing, word went around that the Battalion was soon to depart for another trip overseas. The talk then grew in and around the possibility of obtaining an "Embarkation Leave" for the personnel, since there were local orders against permitting such leaves too soon after the oversea holiday of 30 days. Commander Triest, however, made plans that would permit the men obtaining the freedom he thought they were entitled to. There were many replacements, such as Tippins, Garrity and I, who had not had such a leave within the prohibited time, so we were permitted to enjoy ours while the balance of the battalion sweated out a few more weeks.

Thus it was, on March 5, my birthday, I found myself heading towards Kansas City, a fourteen day Leave paper in my hand.

(I was about to say pocket, but in the Navy clothes, tradition bound, as they are, there are no places to carry anything.)

Upon our return to duty, under Lieut. Hunter, we kept the Battalion going while the balance of the men were away. Tippins assumed charge of the office of the Officer of the Day, while I took over the desk of Executive Aide, doing the publishing of the Plan of the Day and other necessary paper work. In was fun, since none but the bare essentials were taken care of.

But there came an end to our "running the battalion" when,

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during the space of 48 hours, the entire thousand men reported back. Then, did we get into action! There were shots, nine of them, to be taken; physical checkups to be made, new clothing issued. Each man received a carbine, field pack, tropical poncho and gas mask. (I had hoped I'd never be issued another field pack when, at Adak, the year before, I turned mine in, along with the Springfield '03.)

Chapter 11.

DOWN TO THE SEA AGAIN

ON THE AFTERNOON OF April 16, 1945, for the ninth time in my four years in the armed service of the United States (1 year with the Army Airforce in England, 1918, and three years with the Seabees.) I stood alongside a troop transport awaiting orders to go aboard. Around me the troops of my company stood in clusters, talking hurriedly, and laughing now and then, in a peculiar nervous manner.

Big things were at hand. And adventure was to be met somewhere beyond the misty horizon. The long months of training and drilling, since coming into the service, were now in the background. From hereon the worth of all the preparation was to either be proved or disapproved. Then, too, this might be a one way cruise, God only knew. But out of sheer need for peace of mind, this thought was usually kept far in the background of our thinking. Yet it was there, and its presence had a sobering effect upon us despite our show of lightheartedness.

As usual, we were loaded down with gear. Our seabags, this trip, had been stowed in the hold, and we were not carrying anything like the equipment and clothing we had when Alaska was our goal. My luggage consisted of a hand bag, a duffel bag, in which I carried my bedding roll, and my field pack in which I carried much of my extra clothing, emergency rations, etc. I also lugged my poncho, a gas mask and a carbine, plus four clips of ammunition. Besides this we had our canteens, our first aid kits, and such other articles as we thought we would need or could carry.

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By mid afternoon we were all aboard the Cape Bon, a Merchant Marine vessel of small tonnage. By five o'clock we had been shoved away from the dock. And by six o'clock had begun our second tour of foreign duty! By darkfall the shore lines of California were below the horizon, and the Pacific, once again, held us on its breast.

Sleeping quarters for many of us were below No. 4 hatchway, two decks down. The usual five tiers of bunks prevailed, with aisles so narrow between them that but one man could possibly get through at a time. The shower rooms and heads were tile floored, and were better than on any troop-carrying ship I had been aboard. Chow lines were formed along the upper deck, divided by holders of cards of yellow, blue and white, which cards were punched at the entrance of the mess hall to prevent a man going through the line a second time during one meal.

However, as the days passed into weeks, these lines became, through lack of regulation and supervision, regular mobs; those who would take their turn in line, were forced to remain topside until all the men who wanted to crash the line had done so. Just why something was not done about this condition is not known by me. This I know, it brought on many spells of hard feelings and loss of temper.

Breakfasts were usually pretty good, and suppers fair, but the noon meal consisted of a sandwich and an apple or an orange. Though this did not seem to be enough to eat, yet, in the inactive condition we found ourself in on board the ship, it was plenty.

On the evenings that the weather permitted, Chaplain Wagoner, of Webster Grove, Missouri, usually put on a song-fest, or some other form of entertainment. His quiet voice and cheering counsel brought a needed balm to many a troubled heart before the trip was over.

Each morning, at eleven, the "27th Seabee Reporter," E. T. (Ted) Ohlbrecht, of Fair Lawn, N. J., over the loud speaker

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system, read the news of the day he had gathered from listening to the ship's radio. This was a feature eagerly looked forward to by nearly every man aboard, though the news was not always pleasing to hear. On April 19, it was Ohlbrecht's unpleasant duty to announce the death of Ernie Pyle, killed by a Jap sniper's bullet on Ie Jima, off the shore of Okinawa.

But later, May 2, word was flashed over the PA that Mussolini and henchmen had been killed, shot to death by Italian patriots. (I was on board the Yale in the Bering Sea when the word was received that Italy had surrendered.) On May 4, the first word of Hitler's death (if death it be) was sent to us. Then, on May 8, the cheering news of Germany's unconditional surrender was flashed to us while the Cape Bon was anchored in the lagoon of the Eniwetok atoll.

I was on the point of entering the mess hall through a doorway just below a speaker, when I heard Ted's voice break through with the great news. There was cheering in the mess hall, and we were so happy that many of us grabbed our food and hurried on deck to talk with our special friends over the biggest thing in our military history of World War II.

Late that night, over the P. A. System, we were awakened with the announcement that President Truman would soon talk over the radio, concerning Germany's surrender. Bisenius and I hurried down to the mess hall where a radio was crackling away. But, due to the static and to the jabber of some boys, doing late mess hall work, we heard very indistinctly, what the President said. We both thought it too bad that the late President Roosevelt could not have lived to hear of Germany's fall. That we felt elated, is no denying, but we were still sailing westward to meet the Japs on an island, as yet unannounced. And each day found us taking part in boat and raft drill, wearing or carrying our life jackets at all times!

By noon of the second day out of Frisco, April 18, the heat of the southern latitudes began to make itself felt. The troop quarters began to grow "stuffy" and continued to get worse

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as the days went on. Every available spot on deck was taken by men who first spread ponchos, and then placed a blanket or two on them. Competition for choice spots grew so keen that men began bringing their bedding topside by middle of the afternoon in an attempt to be first comers. Not a few small fights were staged and angry words exchanged over cool areas of steel deck.

As for me, below, I found where the intake of air swept downward from the ceiling, and there staked my claim, lying flat on the hold deck, in the current of air. Though I was considerably walked on during the night, it was so much more comfortable than the sweaty bunk, where the bunk above cut off what little air came my way. At first, I would remain topside until "black out" regulations were about to be put in effect, which regulation would have prevented me returning to my bunk, because of the light flash that went out over the sea when the hatch door and canvas was opened. But I learned a few tricks in the matter of going below after "black out," so remained in the coolness of the night sometimes until nearly midnight.

At such times Walter E. Salmon, George Bisenius, Quincy Schreckengauast and I, would find a cool spot on which to rest, and there we would discuss the possibilities of the war's ending before we even reached our destination. Sometimes we would talk of music, of natural history, or of Nazi Germany. But quite often there was a two sided discussion over the way certain officers behaved, or the utter silliness of certain rules of conduct promulgated by the Navy. Sometimes Paul B. Kash, of Frenchberg, Ky., and Frank L. Knight, of Oklahoma City, Okla., would join in the discussion. Guided and directed by Bisenius, the talks would run on for hours, ending only when our seats grew hard, and our eyes heavy.

The first floating edition of the "Coconut Chronicle," Battalion newspaper, appeared on the afternoon of the 21st, one day behind the date line on the publication. The issue was largely taken up with the history of the Cape Bon, its skipper and

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other important members of the officers aboard. There also was a lengthy account of the "dos and don'ts" for troops aboard the vessel. Editor Backes, Ted Ohlbrecht, and myself did the writing, and the editor and I did the work of typing, printing and stapling. Our workroom was atop one of the hatches, between decks, a poorly ventilated place, occupied by the band, Supply Department, the Chaplain, and the Chronicle—to the utter confusion of all!

Yet another edition of the Chronicle was put out May 18, as we lay at anchor in the shimmering blue watered lagoon of the Ulithi atoll, between Guam and Mindano. The first page of this issue was taken over in telling the latest news from the radio. It also told of a planned baseball game between the Battalion nine and a team from off the U.S.S. Tennessee, the game to be played on the island of MogMog, lying, at the time, some seven miles off the ship's bow. (Later the Cape Bon was moved in closer to the tiny island.)

Another item in the Ulithi edition of the Chronicle had to do with Chief H. C. Jenkyns, of North Hollywood, Calif. Jenkyns came to the 27th Battalion after spending a year at Casa Blanca and Bizerte. He is married, and has a son also in the Navy.

Yet another man, recently sent to the battalion as a replacement, has a son in the service. A story about him also was in the Chronicle. It was Alexander Brown, of Ventura, Calif. His son, a lad 20 years old, had gone ashore with the 5th Marine Division on Iwo Jima, but came through that ordeal unharmed. Brown's first tour of duty was with the 38th Battalion, on Kodiak and Adak.

On the morning of April 23, we sighted the famous point of rock, called Diamond Head. Shortly thereafter, we saw the Royal Palms Hotel, and other Hawaiian land marks. We were headed for Pearl Harbor, but some light signals caused us to turn about and, for several hours, stand out to sea, going, the while,

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around the island. By 6:25, we entered the harbor and was made fast to an anchor buoy.

In the afternoon sunlight, I looked over as much of the island as I could see through my glasses from the ship. There were no hula girls in grass skirts to be seen! But I did see a big brown lady standing in the doorway of a hut not far from where we were anchored. On the clothes line attached to a tree and the corner of her hut, my glasses revealed not one sarong, but four pairs of laddie's stepins and one pink silk nightgown!

There was much activity in the harbor that night. After dark, small vessels moved about, keeping an eye on what was going on. It was a relief to be able to leave our life jackets in our bunks, and to walk unhampered about the lighted decks. Every now and then a familiar whistling sounded on the night air, as the little steam train that circles one side of the harbor, went tooting and puffing by. The scene was so fascinating that the Battalion came topside to enjoy the cool breezes from off the sea, and to feel relaxed from the submarine dangers incidental to the journey from Frisco.

Next morning, a small harbor craft came alongside, and a navy newsman scrambled up the ladder. His armload of *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* did not go far nor last long, for the news-hungry men ganged him. Later a man brought some ice cream aboard—that is, got as far as the rail, when he was literally mobbed.

By conversation with men who had been at Pearl Harbor during the Japs' sneak attack, we learned the Cape Bon was anchored almost on the spot where the battleship Arizona went down. (It was on this ship that one of Bonner Springs, Kansas, boys lost his life. Eddie Olsen, an Ensign, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Olsen. He was the first of my home town's boys to lose his life in the war.)

Mail, flown over from the States, reached us on the second day in the harbor. What a pleasure it was to be hearing from loved ones so far from home. (A similar experience was had

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by me at Dutch Harbor. On the day following our having to quit the storm battered Yale, mail reached us from Frisco. What wonders the Navy Post Office performed!)

On the morning of April 24, our ship, now tied up at one of the many Pearl Harbor docks, a draft of 150 men was taken off to be quartered ashore for three days. Though I particularly wanted to set foot on Hawaiian soil, my name was not on the list of those leaving the Cape Bon.

There was no favoritism shown, however, to those removed from the ship. The deciding factor was the nearness of the men's bunks to the hatchway, up which much heavy freight was soon to be hoisted from the hold below.

By not going ashore, though, I missed even more than I knew, for our men had a chance to do their laundry and take fresh water showers. And some of them, during the three days shore stay, got a chance to run into the city of Honolulu to see the sights, and to buy a few souvenirs.

However, on the 26th my loss was in part, repaid. After breakfast chow, under the supervision of Chaplain Joseph Wagner, and Lieut. H. Berger, those who were not on duty were permitted to leave the ship for a visit to "Richardson's Recreation." The spot, some two miles from the dock, afforded servicemen fresh water swimming, beer, Ship's Stores and athletic games.

Needless to state, I went along. But while the others were busy at the pool and stores, I took my glasses and walked along the narrow gage track until I came to a group of trees. There, seated in the shade, where the view presented scenes of the harbor, and the wooded area along the track, I watched events take place.

Of course, the yellow beaked, brown and white Mynah, imported from India in 1865, was the most conspicuous bird. A pair was observed not far from where I was seated, building a nest between a transformer and the pole on which it was supported. There was something about the Mynah that made

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me think of the starling, but the Indian bird is more honored, at least on Hawaii.

There were several smaller brown birds observed, and a few yellow as gold, but the finest creature of the lot was a gray bird, red headed and pink of belly, that slipped between the branches, and stood upright on a twig tip. Later I found it to be another imported bird, a Brazilian Cardinal, evidently, a kindred of our own redbird.

There are many species of wild doves on the Hawaiian islands. In and around Pearl Harbor, and at Honolulu, I saw these birds flying about, some sitting on roof combs; one pair stopped a moment on the steel mast of the Cape Bon. While I sat at my "watching post," on Oahu, I saw several wild doves alight in the dust nearby, seeming to like the feel of the powdery substance on their feathers.

Presently the birds wheeled up into the air, and darted off. Something had frightened them. I swept my glasses along the road paralleling the railroad track, and was astonished to see a brown animal, slender as a ferrett, slipping along through the grass. The animal, later identified as a mongoos, also imported to the islands, soon slid along the railroad ties, its feet scarcely moving, but its snaky brown body making good speed. It passed within 20 feet of me, walking part of the time on top of a rail. Then, with a slow look around, as though suddenly becoming aware of my presence, leaped into the greenery of a ravine, and I saw it no more.

Of insects noted on Hawaii, there were far fewer than I expected to see. A few butterflies, for all the world like the monarch of home fields, flew over the ship while it was in the harbor. And, at another time, I saw others. (In this connection, both at Guam and Tinian, I saw butterflies pass over the ship, that to my brief glimpse, appeared to be monarchs!)

One of the first things I noted, after making Pearl Harbor, and the ship illuminated, was the absence of insects milling about the lights. A few small gray moths appeared, but not

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more than a dozen were seen by me. In the States, by late April, the lights of the streets are swarming with "bugs."

Neither were there flies about the garbage on topside during heat of the morning. A few big blue-green ones appeared, but did not long remain. It is possible that the month of April, in Hawaii, is too early for the insects, but I would rather believe they are not present.

We returned to the ship at 3:00 P. M. Immediately the lines were cast off, and the vessel, minus those who were quartered ashore, set out to sea. At first I did not understand what was taking place, but by asking members of the crew, found we were headed back around the coast to dock in Honolulu for some rations.

While at the Honolulu docks, the morning of the 27th of April, our "missing" personnel came rolling down to the docks in naval busses. By their coming aboard, it looked as though our stay at the "Pearl of the Pacific," would soon be over. Nor were the "looks" mistaken, for by afternoon, we found ourselves headed west again.

The following day returned us to the wearing of our life jackets; with the weather getting very hot, and our drinking water rationed. We could put up with the first two conditions, but when we had to ration drinking water, things took on a less interesting hue. At first, guards were placed on the few drinking fountains to insure no man wasting the liquid. Later, we were permitted to fill our canteens but three times a day.

While the water remained cold, this was tough enough, and we griped much over the arrangement. But when we were permitted but three canteen's of water, and that boiling hot, we really felt Fate, or the ships crew, or our officers (we needed some one to blame) were playing us a dirty trick. Then we began to taste, or thought we did, salt in the hot water we drew. All manner of wild tales were started about the officers enjoying ice water . . . all they wanted; and that the salt water dis-

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tillation plant had broken down, thus permitting raw sea water to get into the water lines.

The temperature climbed each day, as we moved southwest and the steel deck took on a blistering temperature. There was no shade of any consequence, and what there was was too small to help any but a few. Then, someone, out of deep meditation, evolved the idea of lashing up a heavy canvas between a hatch top and the forward mast. Immediately this shaded area became the center of as many sets of card players and bingo sharps as could find room to seat themselves. The rest of the battalion simply walked about, seeking, and not always finding, a breezy spot out of the glare of the sun.

To keep us in trim, after a fashion, physical training was taken up among the various platoons. No one, even the officers, were excused from this training, though, of course, the officers took theirs well hidden from the common eyes of the enlisted men. Though some griped that the physical "limbering up" was an order, for my part I enjoyed it, though some of the "jumping jack" exercises took a mite too much of my wind. Nevertheless, I took them all, and felt better for it.

Each day, now that our No. 3 hatchway Chronicle office had been filled with gear, I made my way to the after deck where, in the superstructure of Hatch No. 1, the Chronicle staff held itself more or less together. Usually if George T. Williams and Stanley Sydor was present, and they usually were, there was a regular bedlam in operation . . . nothing harmful, mainly roughhouse and horseplay. Chief Simon, assistant to Commander Triest, usually sat in one corner, typing various official papers. Sometimes Chief Sears, the "youngest chief in the Battalion" stopped by to chat, or use the typewriter. Even the Supply Department found a place in the cramped quarters to make notations on their records, or to bring them up to date.

Since I like a little more "breathing space," I usually did my writing out on the deck, using, when I could get it from under sleeping Seabees, a large drygoods box from my desk.

DOWN TO THE SEA AGAIN

Usually, I had minutes of sunlight and shadow to plague me, a condition brought about by the evasive action of the ship turning port so many minutes and starboard a stated number of minutes, in an effort to confuse any lurking enemy subs. The result being a mild siege of blindness. By the time my eyes grew accustomed to the shadow, the light would pounce down; by the time my vision was focused to the glare, the shadow swooped back. Nevertheless, I did some writing, and escaped the sardine-like jamming of the after hatch.

On May 1, the Cape Bon was in the vicinity of the International Date line, crossing, at midnight, from May 1 to May 3, thereby hopping over an entire day. There was much comment on the event of the crossing "the Line;" much light chatter about the line being liable to be fouled by the ship's rudder or propeller. Chief Kay suggested that a seaman, armed with a pitchfork, be stationed at the bow, and when the line appeared, the sailor would "hist" it up so that the ship could pass beneath. Whatever practicability the plan held, there is no record available to show it was ever tried!

On the morning of May 6, the convoy, of which the Cape Bon was a part, put into the Eniwetok Atoll. There, in the great, blue water lagoon, surrounded by palm-covered islands of coral, we tarried for 3 days. On the second day, it was my pleasure, to get to go ashore with a group of men to visit Perry Island, a now treeless spot of coral, where a "Recreation Center" has been established. There was a canteen tent under which beer was sold to those who wanted it, and a single bottle of cold coke to those not wanting beer.

Though the island was now devoid of trees, it had not long been so, for stumps of coconut logs were about, and snags of broken trees still stood up in mute evidence of the fury of the warfare that had, but a short while before, taken place on the island. I noticed that these tree snags had been bored with squarish holes, as though a square billed woodpecker had been at work! I soon discovered, however, that the holes were the

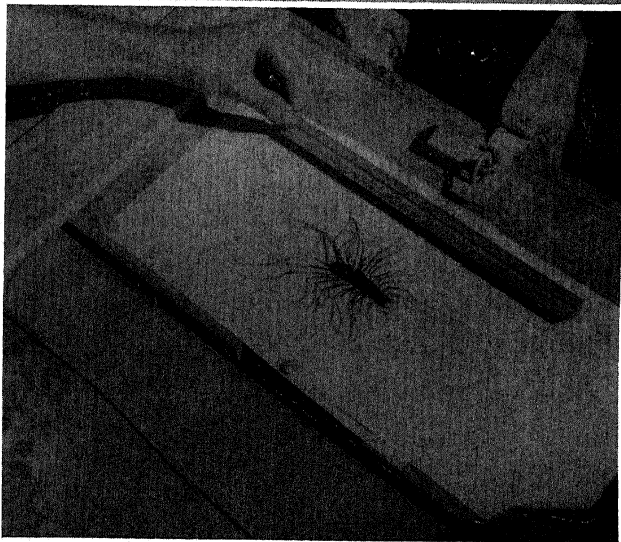
READY ON THE LEFT

work of souvenir-hunting service men digging, with their knives, the bullets embedded in the pulpy wood.

While the men played baseball or football, I scouted around, collecting specimens of coral, shells, hermit crabs, and making such notes as I dared. Saw no birds of the island, but over the adjacent island, through my glasses, I noticed what I later identified as white terns—most interesting birds. But more about them later.

Through the consideration of Commander Triest, he talked the Eniwetok Boat Pool into loaning us a pontoon barge, driven by a marine motor, on which to make the trip from our ship to and from Perry Island. On our inshore trip, the bay was glassy, and we stood upon the barge, so tightly packed together that we could scarcely have fallen off. On our return trip, however, a rain squall came up, and the waves rolled across the deck and over our feet. By the time we reached the Cape Bon, and clambered aboard, we were as wet as drowned rats. But the weather was warm and I, for one, so enjoyed the relief of getting off the ship and onto solid earth again, that I counted the storm but an interesting experience.

Once again, as the Cape Bon made for the open sea, we were ordered to don our life jackets. With every day's passing the temperature arose until the very thought of the life jacket against our skins made us perspire. We were ordered to carry a canteen full of water at all times, to wear our hats, and to keep ourselves, day or night, in readiness for boat and fire drills. Usually at two o'clock in the afternoon, there would be a blast on the steam whistle that sent us down to our quarters, where, with all garments on, and life jackets tied, we had to lie face down in our bunks. Five minutes later, when it seemed we could not live a minute longer in the stifling heat of the hold, we would then be given a signal to hurry topside and assume our stations, facing outward along the rail. Sometimes we were slower coming topside than the ship's officer thought we should be, and had to do it all over again.



NATIVES OF OKINAWA

Upper: Author inspects a mamushi, one of the poisonous snakes found on the island.

Lower: A Scutigera Centipede, giant kindred of much smaller "damp bugs" found in basements and other damp places here in the States. It is really a long legged centipede, and not a cross between a spider and a common centipede, as some have suggested. Both specimens pictured are now in the National Museum at Washington.



Scene from Camp Tappins shower house, Okinawa. 27th Surveying party mapping the terrain. Sweet potatoes in middle ground, rice paddy beyond. Native thatch roofed hut under Luchu pines in back ground. Native path leads to spring.

DOWN TO THE SEA AGAIN

All smoking was forbidden on deck after black out regulations were in effect. Since there was no smoking in the holds at any time, the shower rooms and heads were then the only places men could go to drag on their cigarettes. At such times the smoke there was so thick, one could scarcely see across the room.

The drinking water situation grew steadily worse. Many men, after drawing their quota of hot water in their canteens, went topside and, in an effort at cooling the liquid, lowered the canteen, tied to a line, into the sea, where it bounced along as the ship ploughed through the waves. A better bet was had in placing the canteen of the tasteless, boiling water under the full force of the salt water showers for a half hour or so.

The situation got so bad that the long line of sweating men, awaiting the ration hour, would be in ugly humor by the time the taps were opened. All manner of tricks were being played to obtain a little extra water. Some would fill their canteens, hastily drink a part of it, and hold up the line while refilling. Guards were then put on the one and only fountain, (not counting the fountain in the mess hall), to stop the *terrible* drawing of the extra "swigs" of water.

Due to imagination, or actual salinity, of the water we had to drink, and from which tea and coffee were brewed, these beverages began to lose their flavor. Many a cup of coffee I threw away because of its salty, unpalatable and sickening taste. Water became the topic whenever men began to talk and, as they sweated in the holds, or were on the never cooling metal decks, their minds were upon clear, cold tumblers of water.


Though some of us guessed we were heading to Guam, my friend, George Bisenius, one day sidled up to me, and wrote, on a match box cover, the single word, "Ulithi," up to the moment a place unknown to me. "It's a secret base for our ships," he said. "We are going to spend some time there." Where he got his information, I do not know, but some five days later we steamed into the deep lagoon of Ulithi Atoll to find, or

READY ON THE LEFT

seemed to find, all the ships of the Navy anchored there: battle wagons, famous carriers, destroyers, liberty ships, etc. In one half the horizon's circle, one afternoon, I counted 75 ships at anchor.

Chapter 12.

MOGMOG INTERLUDE

YING 400 MILES southwest of Guam, and but 110 miles east of the then Jap-held island of Yap, Ulithi, like a necklace of green beads, formed a protected anchorage capable of holding a thousand ships of war. The atoll was captured without opposition from the enemy, in September, 1943. Like the Aleutian island of Kiska, the Japs had grown "tired" and skipped out before coming in contact with our troops.

There were some 300, more or less, primitive natives on the island of MogMog when the Americans showed up. The Japs had taken all able bodied men, and as our government decided to make a Recreation Island out of it, it was a small task to talk crippled King Ueg into moving his tribe and belongings to the mile-long sliver of coral, Fassari, in the southern rim of the atoll.

Seabees were then put to work at making MogMog "The Recreation Center of the Pacific." Underbrush was cleared away, dilapidated native huts, of palm thatch, were burned, the others disinfected and made habitable. For much needed shade against the tropical sun, the fine stand of coconut palms, banyans, breadfruit and ever present pandanus, or screw pines, were left standing as found.

Since one of the agreements with old King Ueg (pronounced, we were informed, "Weg") was that the native burial grounds would be kept intact, a picket fence was erected about a small cemetery inland, and a similar wooden barricade about a larger ground near the sea. The fine beach of coral sand

READY ON THE LEFT

was cleared of dangerous obstructions, and otherwise made safe for service men swimmers.

One of the first things done, after clearing off the island, was to divide the tiny plot of coral and sand into three parts; one for the officers, posted against the tread of an enlisted man by signs of "Officer Country." "Keep Out" etc., and for the Chiefs. The remaining area, part of which was yet "deleted" as restricted ground, (the camp site of the Marines having charge of island maintenance) was given over to the devices of the land hungry doughboys and gobs, some of whom had been at sea for many months.

While it is the usual thing to separate the officers from the enlisted men, MogMog went the idea one better (or worse, depending on one's viewpoint) by separating the higher grades of officers from the lower. But for all officers, there was blended whiskey; for the lowly "ems" there was beer, often warm and green.

This was the island upon which we set foot on a May morning. Due to the perseverance of Commander Triest, who arranged it, even as he had done at Pearl Harbor and Eniwetok, we got a chance to go ashore. First, by LCM, we left the Cape Bon, moving the 7 miles to MogMog's shallower water, where we transferred into Higgins boats for the run to the beach. To return to our ship, we had to reverse the process.

I shall not forget my two brief visits to MogMog, finding there, as I did, so much interest in the way of natural history. Here was an island so nearly the counterpart to the ones usually selected by movie directors, as the scenes of their pictured stories, that I was almost afraid to peer too closely behind the beach vegetation lest I find it all make believe, and see a camera grinding away.

The winds in the palm fronds sounded exactly as I expected them to sound. Even the exotic whistle of strange birds came to my ears in a manner that seemed almost familiar. While, after I had gone inland, away from the slightly tarry smell of the

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sea itself, I found the dank odor of mold and vegetable decay hanging heavy on the air, even as I had read about in tales of tropical travel.

I carried my binoculars and, shortly after stepping ashore, I scooted out through the coconut trees, seeking the source of the blackbird-like whistle that intrigued me. Finally, in a strange, glossy-leaved tree, bearing red, apple-hued fruit, I found the whistlers, a pair of dark brown birds, I later identified as atoll starlings. From their actions, I concluded they were building a nest within a hollow in the tree. And, starling like, they took time out every few minutes, to dine on the host tree's fruit.

While I yet focused on the starlings, there came within the circle of my vision, a silvery white bird, with slender wings, dark eyes and a blue-black beak. From my reading in Alexander's "Birds of the Ocean," I knew this bird to be a specimen of white tern, sometimes called, because of their apparently affectionate natures, "Love Terns."

Needless to say, I promptly forgot the starlings, and sought a better acquaintance with the white pinioned creature that, so briefly, had appeared within the range of my binoculars. I did not have long to wait, for in a breadfruit tree, not twenty feet above the heads of a dozen Seabees, three exquisite white terns alighted. Paying the men no attention, the birds went about rearranging their plumage and polishing their beaks, seeming at peace with the world.

Presently, from a silver flock, swirling against the tropic sky, came additions to the trio in the breadfruit tree. As each bird dropped near, it hovered, hummingbird-like, for a few moments before diving through the lobed-leaf canopy to find a place of rest among its fellows. With each new arrival, one or more birds of the assemblage, extended a greeting in the form of a low volumed, but rather high pitched, kingfisher-like rattle. Otherwise, save for the wing whispers of each flyer as it swung in, there was no sound made by the terns.

READY ON THE LEFT

Insofar as my own observations went, there were no other species of birds on MogMog. But, while the ornithological list was short, that of other forms of life was not. Up and down the great boles of cocoanut palm, the lizards, green and gold, moved with ease. The many banyan tree lines, too, were lizard-ladderways to full larders of insect fare. Even the shallow soil of the island teemed with life, usually in the form of hermit crabs, that scuttled under fallen leaves, between coral fragments, or through the roots of palm trees.

Apparently, for the hermit crab, at least, the housing situation on this far Pacific isle was not unlike that found when we returned to the United States, for the creatures were hard put to find suitable shells, to go around. More than one member of the Paguridae family were seen lugging along a shell into which it could not find concealment. Usually it is quite a trick to get a hermit out of its selected "hermitage," but one tightly coiled shell, I picked up, had a tennant that immediately crawled out, dropped to the ground, and disappeared into the coral at my feet.

I saw no butterflies on MogMog, but there were a few moths, all small and inconspicuous. One moth, however, finding much of interest in the thick-leaved beach purslane, was of a silvery color, bespeckled by tiny spots of black and red. Various types of dragon flies were about in the sunshine, but a lovely, black and yellow species fascinated me in their swarming about above a giant banyan tree. Through my glasses, they actually shimmered in the light as they darted this way and that, apparently catching midges rising from the many branched tree.

One of the most popular spots in the island was the swimming beach. Here men, unhampered by even swimming trunks, if they wished to discard them, lolled on the fine white sand, or played in the blue rollers that came in from off the lagoon. Though warned against excessive sunburn, not a few men returned to their ships baked to the color of a boiled lobster. One lad, I noticed, who, evidently had gone to sleep

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with his hands across his chest, was a cinder on all areas except that portion shaded by his arms.

Over the loud speakers of a PA system, placed in the palm trees, as the sun began to lower, came information that members of the shore party of the 27th Seabees were to muster near the dock. I was so charmed with the island, I hated to call it a day and return to the crowded Cape Bon. But we made it back aboard ship, all men present, including myself.

However, during the nine day layover in the lagoon of the Ulithi Atoll, I had a second chance to visit MogMog. As before I walked about, avoiding the larger groupings of men, and watched the various lizards and dragon flies. Talked with one Marine, stationed on the island, who, by the way, was from Missouri, and listened to the plaintive sighing of the trade winds through the creaking cocoanut fronds. Somehow, I could not bring myself to believe there was a war going on just over the horizon, a war in which I was soon to have a part. Yet, all I had to do was to look out across the anchorage to see, not only many ships of war, but some of the mightiest of our Navy.

Two days after my last visit to MogMog, the Cape Bon steamed out of Ulithi, and took up a position in a large convoy heading for Okinawa. (By now we had been informed as to our destination.) Several times, during the days that followed, Commander Triest talked to us over the ship's speaker system, giving us the "low down" on what we might expect once we went ashore. From what he told us, and none were among us who doubted him, we were headed for no picnic.

Though the Japs, during the first week of April, following D-Day, offered but little resistance to our troops, by the time we were nearing the scene, they were fighting with a desperation known only to the doomed. The Kamikazes, suicide flyers, too, were appearing in considerable number, doing more damage than first was announced.

Aboard ship there was little relaxation. Last minute preparation for debarking took up much of the time. All our good

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United States cash had to be turned in for United States "Invasion Currency," a system of paper money bearing such names "yen" and "sen." It took ten yen to make a dollar, and a hundred sen to make a dime! Notes of 10 sen (a cent), 50 sen (a nickel), 1 yen (a dime), 10 yen (a dollar), and 20 yen (2.00) kept us confused for a while, in figuring out the various values.

Since no "real money" was supposed to be on our persons, trading with the ship's stores, post office, and supply office, was transacted by these "coupons." Later, we were paid in yens, though we were permitted to draw but a part of our wages each day.

Each morning, during the last week of our 49 day journey, Capt. Charles S. Naus, a member of the Military Government being established by our Government, on Okinawa, gave lessons in spoken Japanese. Classes were so large he soon divided them into two groups. By a little planning, I attended, in the last days of the trip, both classes, thereby getting double doses of the language.

Time did not drag on our hands on shipboard now. Several times during the day we had sub alerts, rushing on deck and heading outward along the rail opposite from the point of the sub's detected underwater position. More than once destroyers made quick runs over a spot, releasing "ash cans" as they went. But, so far as we know, no subs were destroyed.

As we drew near our destination, air and sub alerts vied with each other to keep us running down the ladders to our bunks or up on deck. Seldom an hour of daylight passed that we did not have one or both alarms. Sometimes the time between the "all clear" and the next alert was so short we did not have time even to unsnap our life jackets.

Finally we reached the end of the trip! By morning we would load. The troops were ordered to bathe carefully, put on clean underwear, in the event of wounds, and otherwise take precautions against infections. All hands were to be awakened at 2

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o'clock the following morning. A breakfast of stewed chicken, fruit and anything yet remaining in the reefers was to be served . . . seconds to any man who desired them! In fact, as some men remarked, "The last meal of any condemned man is always the biggest and best."

Just before sundown, Chaplain Wagner, called a meeting on the forward hatchway. While he usually had a fair sized crowd to hear his sermons and lectures, this day there was not room enough for all who had an interest in hearing his message. (I was one of those who listened). No sob story was his, nor did he dwell on the possibility of some of us not being present on the muster list before many days. He talked calmly and with assurance that come what may, it was God's will.

That night, after the "black out" signal had been sounded, the mess hall was given over to men who wished to write letters home . . . letters that were to be held up pending circumstances and outcomes of our landing. I wrote one long letter to my wife and children, took a salt water shower and retired to my pallet on the steel deck, below the barrack bags swaying from a beam support.

As per order, next morning at 2 A.M. the "Awaken All Hands" sounded. Robert Garrity, who occupied the top bunk over me, leaned over the side and called down, "Donahue! This is it!" L. A. Bosacker, peeked out from his lower bunk. "Yes, Donnie, its time to hit the beach! Get up! As for me, I've decided to remain aboard the Cape Bon and go back to Frisco."

After a long delay in getting breakfast, after which, due to the black out being still in effect, and we could not go up on deck, we sweated in the hold as we assembled our packs, rifles and other gear in readiness for going over the side.

The hour of departure came, but no orders were heard. With the lifting of no light order, we swarmed on deck to look about and get, if possible, some idea of why the delay. When I came up, I saw a low green island against the horizon to starboard.

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Members of the crew said the island was Okinawa. The convoy was still intact, with the exception of one tanker. And we zigged and zagged and circled as never before.

By noon the island had faded! In a foggy sea we listened to Commander Triest tell us our landing orders had been cancelled. It might be a day, a week, or even longer, but we would have to remain at sea until a method was devised to take care of the suicide dive-bombers the Japs were sending in ever increasing numbers. Only that day, in the sea about Okinawa, twelve ships had been hit, several sunk!

Back to sea we went for another five days, dodging subs, keeping a sharp lookout for enemy flyers the while. Men began to talk about the "Lost 27th Battalion," jokingly so referring to our apparently aimless wandering about the Pacific Ocean.

Chapter 13.

OKINAWA!

IT HAS BEEN SAID IF ONE waits long enough one will, eventually, receive that for which he waited. Though it cannot be said we were relishing the thought of getting into action, we had had more than enough of the Cape Bon, and its cramped quarters. So it was, when Commander Triest announced the journey's end on the evening of June 2, we cheered him.

By 8:30, the next morning, we "peeled" off from the convoy, and started toward Okinawa. In a half hour we saw again the outline of the embattled island. By ten thirty we began to see bombs and shells bursting on its green slopes. By eleven we passed battlewagons firing broadsides into the enemy territory. And by noon the sound of cannonading reached our ears—a sound that was not to be quieted for many weeks to come. Truly we had found the war! And shortly thereafter, the war found us!

We had barely come into the Kinmu Wan, among the hundreds of other ships there, when there came an air raid alert. We dived for cover, as per orders, seeking our bunks, and lying face down. Hardly had we hit the blankets when the sound of firing from the ship's guns was both heard and felt. The fifties chattered, the twenties barked, and the five inch let go with all she had!

In the hold there was a momentary panic, as men leaped, for no reason, from their bunks, and started for the stairs. Some of us older men shouted, "Steady; Steady!" In a minute, both the firing and the brief panic was over. Soon news came by word of mouth, from guard to guard, down the ladderway, that

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a Jap plane, attempting to dive on the ship, had been shot down not two hundred yards away!

Later that afternoon, we had another air alert, but this time there was no planes sighted by us, nor was there any shooting from our guns. The roaring of the big guns, however, continued, and after dark, the flashes from their muzzles could be seen against the sky like August sheet lightening at home.

We were told, on the night of June 3, to retire early, and get as much rest as possible. But at 10 o'clock, an air raid alert caused us all to get up and dress, and remain in our bunks fully clothed and wearing helmets, until near eleven. Then, as before, at 2:30 we were awakened. And again we waited until 4:30 for breakfast, then went on deck with our belongings.

All morning we remained on deck with our gear alternately getting a soaking by rain and a steaming by bursts of sunshine. At eleven a new "alert" was sounded—a typhoon warning! A long, low cloud appeared against the sea, coming swiftly and, from the action of gray cloud tongues against a lighter band of vaporous slate, the winds above were wild and strong.

All over the harbor the ships at anchor began to prepare themselves for the blow. Some vessels up anchored and moved to different positions. The LCM, lashed alongside the Cape Bon, ceased taking on our gear, and scooted away to a more protected position somewhere in the bay. We, on deck, piled our equipment near steel uprights, covered it with ponchos, and lashed it there. Then we waited.

But the fates that protected us when the Kamikaze dived on us as we came into the harbor, again must have come to our aid, for, though the wind briefly blew at almost hurricane velocity, and rain fell like loosened gravel from a tar roof, there was little or no damage done. The rain, too, slacked off, and the outlines of the green covered beach began to take form again.

By 4 o'clock that afternoon, the word came for my company and platoon to go over the side into the LCM that had returned alongside. We slung our gear aboard and packed ourselves

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upon it as comfortably as was possible under the circumstances. We had a trip of twenty miles or so ahead of us and, knowing it was to be after dark when we were to go ashore, we arranged our belongings where we could find them with least trouble. As our LCM pushed out of the bay, through the recently installed sub nets, Chief Horton and I shared some K-rations together, since we had found seats on our luggage near each other, and talked of the adventure ahead of us. We had no idea what the next few hours would afford, but we were all carrying our carbines, with plenty of ammunition available, so, in a measure, felt that we would not be like sitting ducks to the enemy.

Just before dark, the ship's radio picked up the warning that a low flying Jap plane was headed our way. We were ordered to crawl as low in our baggage as was possible (there being no cover over our heads) and to wear our steel helmets. For a half hour the gun crew stood by their guns, covers off and ready to fire at a moments notice. By this time a pitch darkness was on the bay, making unlikely the possibility of being spotted by the enemy. There was the chance, however that flares could be dropped from planes, and our ship yet be strafed, but we had little worry that this might take place.

Presently, from starboard, a light shot across the water, swept over the LCM, fore and aft, and blinked out as abruptly as it had flared. A similar port light gave us an inquiring eye a few minutes later. At the time, we were not happy to thus be outlined against the black, but found that friendly vessels were there to guide us into the beach. A ship's bell sounded alongside, and a small craft hove to near by. The motor of our ship was stopped while the officers held a consultation.

It was all so eerie that I could scarcely believe what was actually taking place around me. I had read of stealthy landing parties; of the invading of enemy shores, but did not dream I would be taking part in just such a venture. Yet, here before me, not much less than half mile into the darkness, was the

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hore of Okinawa, enemy held land . . . and we were going shore!

I heard the stern anchor drop into the water, and the winch lay out the chain as the LCM continued to move inshore. A word of warning to watch out for a beaching, and the ship eased into a bank of mud. The big doors swung open, and the steel ramp was let down, revealing in the glow of landing lights, a yellow-red sail, almost liquid with the recent rains.

The men nearest the open doorway were first ashore, wading, water to their knees, but soon planking was set up between the ramp and the higher portion of the beach shelf. Over this we, carrying our gear, tramped ashore. The sound of truck and bulldozer motors reached our ears, filling the night with a roaring, so near and so loud that the sound of the constant shelling from the battlewagons was blanketed.

All through the night, like ants carrying home provender, we trudged to the shore and back into the ship, carrying supplies on our out load, and our weary selves on the in trip. For one thing, most of the men had slipped into the sea one time or another, during unloading operations, and from fatigue and soggy dampness, were ready to drop in their tracks by the time the first faint streaks of dawn began to lighten the sky.

With the coming of daylight, we saw we were being helped ashore by trucks and bulldozers of the 40th Battalion. We loaded the supplies onto the trucks that slipped and slid down the beach in the yellow mud for the loading. Armed guards rode the trucks, and men were sent to our temporary camp site as guards against mishap to our huge stacks of supplies being unloaded there. When I was weary to complete exhaustion, Chief Horton motioned me onto an outgoing truck, an order I wasted no time in obeying.

It was not long until I was riding past groves of Luchu pines, at topped, and picturesque. The ground beneath them was carpeted by ferns and lacy vines, with here and there a giant sword fern showing darkly green against lighter hued vegetation.

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In the trees a few Japanese wood pigeons flew about, as we drove along, and the giant webs of the tropical *Nephila* spiders were to be seen at the roadsides, webs, sometimes ten or more feet across, and watched over by giant black, white and yellow spiders clinging, garden spider-like, in the center. Despite the roar of the motors and the now distant booming of the big guns, as we drove along, I could hear a shrill sound as though cicadas were busy, a fact that I later learned was so. For, besides a small, dark winged, speckled insect, there was a huge brown black fellow, that would make two of our largest at home.

We passed fields of sweet potatoes in which native women were swinging heavy, three tined fork-like hoes. Some women had young infants strapped to their backs, the babe's head rolling with each motion of its parent. As we passed through a village of thatched or tiled roof houses, the odor of a lack of sanitation was noticeable. Women, children and old men ranged along side the highway, staring at us in wonder and, no doubt, dismay. They smiled at our greetings, and some of the older natives lifted their right hands in salute, as they bowed low. No sign of hostilities were in their expressions, but one little shaved headed lad, I would say about five years old, shook his fist at us as we thundered past his doorway.

In the town of Kin, outside of which was located our first camp, there was much evidence of the war. Many houses had recently been burned to the ground, either kindled by shells or burned by our sanitation squads as a preventative against disease and vermin.

The wooded area about Kin was blackened and burned from the use of flame throwers in routing out Japs from their burrows in the hillsides, or from their positions within the great ancestral tombs for which the area was noted. These tombs, often much more elaborate than the houses their builders lived in, built of concrete and coral, afforded the Nips a chance to fire upon our troops from comparatively good cover.

Despite the army's dislike at destroying such things, it became

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sary that the sniping Japs be eradicated, so the tombs, with jars of ancestral bones, had to be blasted out of the des where they had been for centuries. Two such blasted s could be seen by us from our first camp.

I rode into camp, that first morning, I found Bisenius, ity, Backes, Sydor and Williams had preceeded me, having he unloading of the ship sometime during the night. A later I met Jurak, Salmon, Gillham, Young and Knight, as ug for our belongings, into the piles of seabags and other

We then drew an issue of cots and mosquito netting, and, ie cots, and under the netting slept in the full glare of the until mid-afternoon.

2 P.M. Commander Triest called the battalion together told it what he had been told about the natives, the Japs re island, the snakes to be feared, and the conditions in al. Some of what he told us later proved to be without dation, but we all agreed it was better to fear the worst and it better than expected, than to expect good and find it he opposite.

he natives," he said, called 'gooks' by the servicemen, a dirty, diseased lot, cunning and dangerous. To all pur- s, they are Japs, for many of the women here are either wives istresses of Japs, with consequent Nipponese decendents." were warned and ordered "not to fraternize with the natives y way, shape or form."

at afternoon was taken up with erecting tents, and getting upply piles covered with canvas against damage by rain. quarters company occupied a bean patch overlooking an rip in the making, a spot, we were to find, not conducive lid slumber because of the clatter of the carryalls and bull-s working the clock around.

l afternoon Army and Marine tanks, armored cars and , passed back and forth along the roadway dividing our , area. Weary companies of men tramped along the roads, hted with all the paraphernalia of combat. Some looked

OKINAWA



EAST CHINA SEA



OKINAWA!

upon the newly arrived battalion of Seabees with pity, some with mirth, while others looked unseeingly. Seldom did any speak.

Just before sundown, a crackling of machine gun fire broke out below camp, and continued intermittently late into the night. Our guards being posted about camp had instructions "to shoot first and ask questions afterward." No man was to stir from his tent after dark. To do so would invite a shot in his direction. The native population in the nearby town had been warned against wandering out of town at night, so it was quite certain any figure seen moving about had no business there, and was therefore a fit target for any rifleman who chanced to see it.

That first night was a full one. Not only did the big guns keep up a steady rumbling, and the machine guns and BARs, toward the bay, crackled sporadically the hours along. But shortly after we had turned in for the night the siren at the 40th Battalion headquarters began to wail out a warning of an impending air raid. Since the 40th area was adjoining our camp site—in fact, we were camped on the 40th's own area—the sound of their warning signal was right in our tents. The alert, which developed no near approach of enemy planes, lasted nearly an hour. We could not go out to watch the skies for planes, had there been anything to see, so we sat on our bunks in our night clothes, wearing our steel helmets. Twice more that night the siren sounded, but on the third warning, we, in my tent, at least, did not even bother to get up.

But the air raid alerts were not the only cause for a disturbance. About two o'clock in the morning, the guards on the bay side of our camp, saw a figure of a man running at a crouch along the road. Without a moment's hesitation, though they opened fire, the man continued to run deeper in the camp. By this time the guards were all looking for spies, and began to shoot right and left. As the running figure came near our tent guard-house it slipped in the mud and fell headlong. In an

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instant, however, the stranger was up, and continued on past my tent, leaping from side to side in an effort to escape the hail of lead that was flying around.

The Jap soldier, (he later proved to be one) was killed by the guards as he tried to pass the 40th sentries. He had managed to elude our men, but he left, where he slipped in the mud, a battle cap of a U. S. Marine. Inside the cap was the name "Becker" and the Marine insignia. Evidently the Jap had picked up the cap and, thinking to aid his chances of getting through out lines had it on his head.

On the night of June 6, there sounded five different air raid alerts; "Red Conditions," as they were called. This time we heard enemy planes overhead, and shortly thereafter, anti-aircraft fire began to sound from the beach below us. Flashes of light appeared in the sky as the "ack-ack" burst in the clouds. However, so far as we knew, the Jap plane was not shot down in our region, whatever might have been its plight farther on.

During a similiar "Condition," on the night of June 7, while I was on my bunk, half asleep, I heard a strange whistling in the air above the tent. In less time than it takes to write it, a nearby explosion shook the camp to its coral foundations. Since we could not stir around, nor did we know that another "messenger" was not coming our way, the men in my tent, including myself, decided there was nothing better, at the moment, to do but lie still; that we did!

In an effort to locate enemy planes, above the booming of the battleguns along the coast, we strained our ears, listening for the telltale zoom-zoom-zoom of Japanese aircraft. But, save the cracking of rifle, now and then, there was no sound to indicate close action, or that the missile had been dropped from overhead, we, therefore, decided it had been a rocket gone "haywire" from one of the ships on the bay. But enemy bomb or friendly rocket, would have made little difference had the camp been under its fall. Two more air alerts completed the night's activities.

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Word should be said here of the great help and kindness the 40th Seabees gave to the 27th Battalion. Our mess hall was not in operation, so, to keep us from having to eat emergency rations, the 40th invited us to chow with them. Their food was excellent, and their hospitality heart warming.

Scarcely had the various members of the 27th Battalion been assembled together than Commander Triest, in a called meeting, informed us that the outfit would soon be divided into two detachments. One detachment was to proceed southward to Yonabaru, where a military road needed to be constructed through country yet held by the enemy. The other detachment was to move to the site of our "permanent" camp, and there erect the tents and such buildings as were needed.

It so happened that Chief Tippins, my old friend from the 45th Battalion, was selected to be one of the men making the trip to the south. Just before he departed, he sought me out and asked me to keep, for him, a bit of, then forbidden U. S. currency, a five dollar bill. "Ralph, I don't know what is in store for those of us who are going south, but I think you 'northerners' have a better chance to come out alive. If I do not come back, to keep some Jap from getting it, I want you to either keep this money yourself, or send it to my folks."

It so happened that "Tipp" did not come back. (He should not have come with us on this trip, for his health was not good, and the long sea voyage, with its hardships, played havoc with his body.) When the tragic word came to us, then at the north camp, I waited the required 30 days, during which time the Navy notified his folks of his passing, then mailed the money to his home address in Florida.

I was saddened by Chief Tippins death, for we had had much in common in our interest in creative writing, and we had been together now for over two years. The Battalion, as a whole, missed him too, for on the Plan of the Day, under date of June 29, 1945, there appeared this memorial notice:

"Yesterday, at 0605, Chief Bedel A. Tippins, a well respected

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man of our battalion, passed away. To most of us he was just plain "Tipp." He was born December 7, 1901. He was a veteran of World War I; had 3 sons in the present conflict, one son being recently liberated from 18 months incarceration in a German prison camp, is now home awaiting his father's return.

Chief Tippins had been with us only a few months, but during that time, his pleasing personality aided him in acquiring a solid friendship with many members of the battalion. He was conscientious in his religious faith, and equally so in his work. It is with deep regret that we have to lose our friend and fellow serviceman. Long he will be remembered by this battalion. May his soul rest in peace.

W. F. E. Cabaniss, Officer in Charge,
North Camp.

Chapter 14.

THE CAMP AMONG THE PINES

BY THE 10TH OF JUNE, OUR camp on the 40th's area had dwindled to a nub. Men had been moved to both the north and south areas. Being in charge of battalion censorship, I was not ordered north until some of the preliminary work there had been done. But on this date I helped roll the remaining tents, load them on trucks, and sped, bumpy-bump, over fifteen miles of very dusty yellow roads. By the time I arrived at my destination, my eyes, as those of my companions, looked like grapes mashed in a dusty lane! . . . and felt about as bad.

Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed the trip, rough and dirty though it proved to be. Always eager to see as much of any country I find myself in, I looked with all the power my old eyes would permit, at the strange scenes along the way.

From Kin, we passed through Kanna, Kushi, Henoko and Ginusa, all small walled and thatched (or tile) roofed villages. It was amply evident that the Army and the Marines had preceded us by some days, for small boys stood beside the roadway, making vulgar signs and shouting words, not understood by them, that indicated Tojo had peculiarly disgusting table manners and dietary requirements.

Often, as we rumbled across bridges, recently repaired from a badly damaged condition, we would see the village folk, sans bathing garments, washing themselves, quite unabashed that they were out in the open, and the eyes of strangers were upon them. Sometimes an old man would be seen to be bathing himself in the muddiest of mudholes, so near the roadway that the yellow dust descended on his shoulders even as he washed it

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off. At other times, women folk, standing quite nude, but with backs to the road, it must be admitted, washed themselves from tubs beside a village well. At first, the men whistled at such scenes, as well they might, but as the months went on, and scenes multiplied, little attention was paid to them.

I do not believe, on all Okinawa, a prettier site could have been selected for our camp. It was situated within a timbered area, and overlooked the blue water of Ora Wan (Wan: a Jap name for bay) on one side, and the flower be-decked village of Ginusa on the other. Two streams, the valleys of which, as in other parts of the island, had been planted in rice, had their start within the limits of the camp, afforded excellent drainage.

After the first tents were up, crews of men were put to work clearing away the underbrush, and trimming up the pines that had been left to afford us shade. From the first night on, guards were stationed about the camp, each station being connected by telephone with the OOD's tent. Between certain of the guard posts, trip-flares were installed, and machine guns set up to command the more dangerous areas. Some posts had BAR's, but the greater number had guards armed with carbines.

Two men stood all night guard on each post. While one slept, the other kept his eyes open and his rifle ready. By this system, it was not necessary to change guard during the hours of darkness, when great was the danger of being mistakenly fired upon. Added precaution was had in the Officer of the Day making his visits by telephone, thus being able to know how things were going on each post without the danger of being mistaken for the enemy.

During the first weeks of the existence of the North Camp, since the "permanent" sites were yet uncleared, tents were set up anywhere the ground was moderately level and the brush not too thick. The tent used as the mail censor's office (and where A. O. Jay, mail clerk, and I, lived the while) was alongside that occupied by the telephone switchboard and the OOD's office. We were not only close enough to hear what Central

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and the Officer of the Day said, but could hear what was coming in over the wires. Consequently, with all the hubub of orders, air raid alerts, etc., Jay and I were often denied sleep. But we could scarcely complain, for we always had information as to what had taken place, or was about to take place, long before the rank and file were let in on the secret. Also we knew which guardpost was having trouble, and the reason for continued blasts of rifle or machine gun fire.

Since the camp, as I have previously mentioned, was set among timber, it was possible that enemy snipers could sneak, undetected, to the very limits of the area. (The wooded area being selected because of its camouflage protection from high flying planes). At first, the guards were instructed with the old order of "Fire first; then ask questions," which was interpreted to mean that every shadowy figure, or even unexplained sound was to be fired upon. The net result being that the nights were continually vibrating with fireworks, first on one side of the camp then the other.

As the weeks wore on, however, and no riddled Jap body was found about the camp, and certain Army patrols, moving through the pines, complained of whizzing Seabee lead disturbing their nocturnal excursions, the activity of 27th triggers was curbed. Guards were then ordered, unless under extreme provocation, to obtain permission from the OOD before firing.

On my sleepless cot I would hear a call come in. "Say, Chief," a guard's voice, often not a little excited, could be heard, "there's something moving down here in a rice paddy; think its a man. Do you want to come down and see about it, or shall I blast him?" Or perhaps the information would inform the OOD that a strange light was flickering through the trees in the ravine back of the mess hall supply dump.

In all cases the officer would make inquiries before ordering the guard to open fire or, in rare instances, admonishing the sentry to remember the challenge word and its answer before saying he, the OOD, would visit the alarmed post.

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Early one morning, before daybreak, and during a "Red Condition," while the horizon to the south was in blossom with exploding ack ack, I heard a guard's voice announcing a "small figure in a black kimono coming across the field. Unless it changes its direction its going to cross the camp line between this post and No. Nine."

The OOD's command of "Stop the man at all costs," was scarcely uttered before firing broke out so fast and continuous that we could scarcely believe it the work of carbines. The air raid, then going on, evidently had tightened the men's nerves, for firing began to sound all around camp. I recall as a measure of needed comfort, I felt beneath my cot where I kept my rifle ready, and pushed my hand under my pillow, where I kept the extra loaded clips—a sort of ritual I went through when situations seemed to threaten danger.

Presently, the guard's voice sounded again, "We got him! He's out here in the brush and groaning. Better send a detail out to pick him up."

A call to the sick bay for a couple of pharmacist mates, a word of warning to each guard post by which the "doctors" had to pass, and soon a detail was assembled for the dangerous mission of picking up the wounded man . . . dangerous in that it all might be a trick of the enemy, or a trap to take a few prisoners. Nevertheless, too, it might not have been an enemy!

The first streaks of dawn were breaking over Ora Wan as word came to the guard office that the wounded "man" proved to be a very old native woman, and that her wound was not serious since she had only been shot through the shoulder. From the sound of the firing I should have thought the poor, bewildered creature would have been cut to ribbons. Seems she had paid no attention to the guard's order to halt, other than to start to run when she had heard his voice. And since Jap men were often found in the kimono-like costume, and the light was not too good, there was no other way to be certain but to shoot.

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While the North Camp guards were not credited with killing any Jap soldiers, it was a different story at the South Camp. I have no official count of the enemy killed there, but the unofficial list stood at 22 by the end of the war. But there were Jap soldiers in the North woods, as proved by the Army and Marine mop-up squads in their monthly beating of the brush and caves.

On the evening of the 12th of June, we in the North Camp received a camp welcome in the form of a shelling from the bay. As yet we had no fox holes or bomb shelters erected, and it was simply luck that there were no casualties.

I was standing with George Bisenius, Joe Duel and Fred Gillham, talking with L. P. Stom, one of the Battalion barbers, in his open air barbershop under the pines. Suddenly from the bay we heard heavy gunfire, followed by the sound of exploding anti-aircraft shells high over head. The next instant the camp was sprinkled by falling metal, and in the roadway to our right, a geyser of dirt and sand rose up where a shell exploded.

Now George, Joe, Fred and L. P. had been on Tulagi, on their first tour of duty, and had been through shellings and bombings before. Instinctively, they threw themselves down and started crawling. Stom faded away into the low-growing bush like a rabbit. George, always quick on the get-away at such times, was gone before we knew it. I was not brave in standing there like a ninny, but it seemed to take me longer to get into action. Finally, seeing the company street crawling with men, I ducked and hurried to my tent. As I stood under its "protection," a fragment of whirring metal cut downward through a pine whose shade shadowed the canvas area overhead, and buried itself in the yellow dust not ten feet from my bunk. What happened next, I do not remember, but Joe Duel and I found ourselves under my bunk!

Later, when the shelling was over, and we collected in knots to talk over the experience, we had many a laugh over individual behavior. I "explained" my action of getting under

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my bunk was entirely due to the large size of the falling metal fragments . . . far too large, I said, to get through the small mesh of the mosquito bar over my cot . . . but why Joe did not get under his own bunk was never made clear. George Bisenius, it was later found, had thrown himself into a large truck rut, and had wormed over under a standing truck, like a mouse under a stone.

That the camp had not been under bombardment by the enemy, made little difference to our danger. It was another evidence that in giving the enemy flyers "Hail Columbia," the ships in the bay had also given us a shellacking. The shell that exploded in the roadway evidently was a dud in so far as its time fuse failed to explode it where it could have done the most good.

Next day there was much earth turning. Every man who could be spared from his regular duties was presented with a pick or a shovel and told to dig. Nor were there laggards in the work. While one group cut trees in the timber and carried logs in for shelter covers, another group did the actual dirt moving. George Bisenius, recently added to the censorship crew, actually volunteered to do the shoveling for the staff! Nor would he change off, preferring to see first hand that the shelters were strongly built. He saw to it we would not be caught "short" next time!

A few nights later, during another "Red Condition," several of us got up from our bunks the better to watch the anti aircraft shells break against the sky. From the abundance of the bursts and the length of time the shooting was taking place, we judged a big Jap raid was on. But, since the bursts were not overhead, we did not bother to go to the bomb shelters, though we measured the distance to them with our eyes . . . just in case.

The crash of the anti aircraft guns seemed to roll in waves, thundering even against the sound backdrop of the big guns on the battlewagons, then almost fading away. But the gun-

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ners were on their toes for, after a bit, we saw a great yellow explosion followed by a trail of sparks and flame. "There is one less Jap to worry about," commented Bennet Young, slapping at a mosquito around his head, "one more Nip in hell!"

Toward the west from our camp, beyond some hilly country, a tall mountain peak lifted into the sky. It was green covered, and thickly topped with pines that grow on Okinawa. On the 14th of June, Bisenius drew my attention to long tongues of flame throwers licking up the mountain side. Wherever the red tongues went the trees burst into smoking blaze. We figured the Marines were clearing the hilltop of desperate Jap defenders. Next day's events proved our conclusions to be true.

From the activity in the sky, on the 16th, with black widows, P-38s, and other fast planes swirling about, we looked for some excitement. Nor were we disappointed. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Marauders began to drop bombs on the mountain, an operation close enough for us not only to see the bombs streak downward, and the flame and smoke shoot upward, but we could hear the sound of the explosions as well.

For fully twenty five minutes the planes dived on the mountain top, one after another, until it looked as though the great mound was a volcano in eruption. At the sound of one terrific explosion when a great mushroom of oily black smoke, shot with flame, leaped to the sky, I heard the Chaplain, not irreverently, exclaim, "God!" Nor could any one have blamed him had he been other than reverent, for the spectacle was of such a nature we were all, more or less, stunned by it. What such action was doing to the Japs we did not try to guess, but judging by events that immediately followed, and continued until Japan surrendered, the enemy was fast getting all he wanted.

Nevertheless, the desperate Japs yet on Okinawa, especially towards the south, were not giving up without a struggle. Word reached us on the 19th of June that General Bruckner had been killed by enemy action, and that a jeep full of Military Govern-

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ment men had been ambushed just northward of our camp, every man losing his life in the action.

On the morning of June 22, men at the north camp were afforded the thrill of a dogfight to the south of the area. I knew an air raid was on, but for once remained with the reading of outgoing letters, since we were somewhat behind in the work. But by so doing I missed seeing a Jap plane shot down by two Navy Corsairs. The enemy plane exploded before plunging into the bay.

Next day, during an air alert, we heard several planes fly over the camp, above a canopy of clouds, firing as they flew. And that night we watched a Jap plane twist and turn in the pyramid point of a dozen or so search lights that had centered on it. From the fact that the ack-ack continually broke below it, we judged the plane was too high for a hit. Finally, the Jap slipped out of the light cone, and went roaring back towards Japan, the first and only enemy plane I ever saw get away after once sighted.

Thus the days ran on, scarce a 24 hours passing without an air raid alarm. If the raids came in daylight, and the camp was not target for enemy action, it made little difference in our lives. But if the alert came in the early evening shortly after dark, we howled to the tops of the trees. Whatever we were doing then, or planned to do, had to be postponed during "lights out." Sometimes the "All Clear" signal would be an hour or more in coming, and by that time the evening had grown so old it was time to retire. And, a little later on, when our outdoor movie screen was erected, it was especially disgusting to have to switch off the projecting machine when the picture had reached its most dramatic or interesting part, just because a little brown man or two picked that time to go flying.

But of such were small, though sometimes irritating incidents that kept life from becoming dull. There were other far more important worries that continually plagued us. For instance, due to the loudspeaker public address system, over which,

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three times a day, recorded strains of "Cow-Cow Boogie," "No Letter Today" and other such classics, came to our ears, and from which, due to strategically located speakers, there was no escape while in camp. Then there was the order that forbade us coming into the mess hall for dinner with our sleeves rolled up! Ah, yes. Sherman was right!

On the 24th of June, word came to us at North Camp, via the "New Okinawan," an Army publication, that 7,000 Japs had surrendered the day before—the largest mass surrender since the Japs came to grips with us. Ensign Julius, back with the Guard Mail from the island "Top Side," reported the barb-wire bullpens were actually swarming with Jap prisoners. And for the following few days the "bag" increased until it began to appear that all the island defenders had either been killed or captured.

Just how the trick was worked, or by what manner such a conclusion was arrived at, I am at loss to know, but the announcement came to us over official channels that the island was "Secured." True the sound of shelling from the battlewagons had ceased, but mopping up exercises were still going on as Army and Marine patrols continued to dig out embattled Japs, and truck caravans, on the more lonely stretches of highway, were occasionally fired upon. Then too, the Nip flyers continued their raiding, though, it must be admitted, in diminished numbers.

That the island was far from safe for unarmed servicemen, even though it was "Secured" is illustrated by a notice that appeared on the Battalion's Plan of the Day under date of June 30, 1945. It read:

"*ALL HANDS:* There have been instances recently of men going to work outside the camp area, and failing to carry their carbines. This is a very dangerous practice and should be stopped immediately. Although the Island is secured, this does not mean that all the dangers have been eliminated. from snipers, or otherwise. Men working outside the camp area should

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make a habit of taking their rifles with them at all times."

While we are looking at the Plan for June 30, we also read: "*ACCIDENT REPORT*". Billy M. Folsom, MM1c, was injured Wednesday afternoon through a treacherous act of the enemy. While working in a barrow pit close to Route 44, the D-7 tractor, which he was operating, ran over and exploded a land mine, causing him serious injuries and almost complete destruction of the tractor. Folsom, much the worse for his experience, will survive."

July 4 came and went with little or no fireworks, though we once heard the sound of a Jap aircraft flying high over the overcast. But about midmorning, of the day that followed, there was enough noise for the most rabid fireworks fan.

At the time I first became aware of the explosions, I was sneaking a few minutes away from the censor room (since our morning's quota had been taken care of, and the afternoon mail had not come in) and had climbed the hill overlooking the mess hall, after dragon flies. Through my binoculars I scanned the coast line to the south of Ginusa, at which point the sounds seemed to originate. Presently I saw columns of black smoke shoot up, carrying with them timber and other debris.

Soon the whole southern part of Okinawa seemed to be under bombardment. The sound increased, along with my pulse, for I believed the enemy had sneaked in a task force and was trying to retake the island. Down in the camp area I could see the troops gathered into groups, pointing and gesturing. Yes, there was something in the wind! And me without a helmet, and armed with only a bug net!

I hurried down the hill to the OOD tent. There I learned the explosions were caused by the blowing up of an ammunition dump. No Jap raid after all!

The earth shaking explosions lasted until early afternoon when they died away, and "peace" again came to Okinawa. By that time, however, many thousands of dollars worth of ammunition had been wasted, and that much more shipping space

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required to transport the replaced amount from the United States. What set the dump off, we never learned, but "scuttle" had it that a Jap hand grenade was to blame.

Chapter 15.

"ME NO JAP! ME OKINAWAN!"

D ESPITE THE INFORMATION we were given to the contrary, when we first landed on Okinawa, I found the natives a friendly, likable race. The better I became acquainted with them, the better I understood the handicaps under which they lived, the more interested I became in their outlook on life and manner of doing things.

To begin with, given a chance to clean up, they were far from being a dirty people. Ever and always they bathed in the only bathtubs they had—the streams of the island, or the water of the bay. Lacking soap, they rubbed themselves vigorously with a cloth until it would seem they would wear their brown skins away. And how they would punish their clothes with paddles while washing out the grime! The wonder is not that they got their garments clean by this method, but that they had any cloth left after all the poundings!

Modesty, of course, is relative. That which would be considered immodest in one part of the world would not be so considered in another. But judged even by the standards of the English speaking world, though the Okinawans bathe in the open, and without garments, they, especially the women, are not immodest.

After restrictions were lifted on the island, I traveled about a good deal, in my sparetime, assembling my entomological collection for the Smithsonian. I often came upon natives bathing in ponds and streams, but I have yet to see any deliberate or brazen display of the body, or vulgar action. Usually the two sexes bathed in different groups, although not exactly

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hidden from each other. The women usually wrapped a towel about themselves as they came out of the water, and turned their backs while drying.

In several instances I heard about, and one I personally observed, feminine modesty was served by the simple use of a loosely bound handful of rice straw. One afternoon, as Stanley Sydor and I walked along the gently sloping beach to be found on certain areas of Ora Wan, we came to an old native woman bathing in the surf. She had seated herself on the sand at a point where the waves would splash over her withered body on their farthest run, only to roll back and leave her well out of the water. Though she was entirely unclothed, she kept a handfull of straw across her lap, and when she stood up to dry herself, she placed the bundle between her thighs!

Because the unclothed body is not offensive on Okinawa, our camp showers required no screening. Often as we washed away the day's dust, native women would be working in rice fields nearby, or would come close to beg for soap. Usually, though, when the soap deal was made, small boys would come for the bartered item. The women neither looked nor looked away, nor were they seemingly embarrassed unless some mouthy weight would yell at them as they went by. When this happened, which was not infrequently, the women would turn their backs and walk haughtily away, plainly insulted.

When the camp had progressed far enough to boast its own laundry, ten or a dozen native women, under a *bonsbo*, or native leader, were obtained to assist in the work. At first the clothes of these women were ragged and soiled, but once the women had a chance to clean their garments, there were none more clean than theirs. Clean clothes did something to the women's looks too, restoring their pride and causing them to stand out among the fifty other women who came each day, via truck from the Military Government Housing areas, to cut brush within the confines of the camp.

On Okinawa, as with most Oriental lands, the women do

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the work. Consequently, they are more verile and robust than their masculine partners. The women not only take care of the homes, bear and care for the numerous progeny, but also gather the wood for the fires, work in the fields, and otherwise carry the greater burden of existance.

When the U. S. Military Government took over the island, it immediately impounded every able bodied man the Japs did not take away. For two reasons, this was done. In the first place, the difference between a Japanese and an Okinawan, mixed as he is of various races, is small indeed, and there was no telling just how far his sympathies went. Then too, by impounding the men, there were less chances of spies getting back into the hills with military information for the embattled enemy. And there was work to be done that the native man could and should do.

At first, when the men were informed that there was work to be performed, howls went up to the clouds. It was the woman's place to work! Not they! But a few examples of doing without ration soon decided the midget brotherhood that labor was not nearly so feminine as they first had believed!

Some hundred men came each day to work in our camp. They were an interesting lot, small of stature, and ranging in ages between 18 and 50. Many wore discarded Jap uniforms, cap and divided toed rubber shoes, but the greater number came to their daily toil garbed in all manner of GI cloth. A few wore the conventional black, coarse woven kimono, with flattened cone hats of rice straw.

There seemed to be but one interest in their lives. That was to find discarded cigarette butts. Always, when moving through the tented troop areas, they kept their slanted eyes upon the company street, seeking the cigarette fragments the Seabees had thrown away. Each worker carried a small can in his pocket, if such there be, or tied about his neck by a string, if there be not. Into this container the butts would be pulverized between the thumb and forefinger. Should a half "fag" or more

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be found, it was usually saved intact to be smoked in a tiny metal pipe until nothing remained of the "weed" but the ash.

The men and boys were not alone in the eternal quest for tobacco. There were women who "policed" the areas as thoroughly as the men, though, I must say, the trait was not as common among the women as among the fathers of their offspring. It is recalled a certain native woman who, every few days, came to the sweet potato patch wherein we had built our mess hall, to gather the tender potato leaves for greens.

Without saying a word to anyone, she would go down the rows, picking a leaf here, a leaf there, until her apron was bulging. Always she worked her way over near the mess hall door about the time the men began to enter the building at chow time, for there they always tossed away their cigarettes. Then did she make a harvest of "butts." Once in a while she would find one yet burning. When this happened, she popped the thing between her lips, and puffed in evident pleasure, while a cloud formed about her face in the rapidity of her smoking.

When four thirty came, and the words "*sagio watta*" sounded over the loud speaker system as a signal that the native's day's work was over, they would race to the waiting trucks, the men climbing in first, leaving the women to get in as best they could. Usually the women had gathered themselves fire wood or items of cardboard, tin cans or what not, and these they balanced on their heads as they moved toward the trucks, or set out across the fields toward their homes. Most of the women were barefooted, but a few managed to wear wooden sandals, held on their feet by a strap or band over the top of the foot. A few wore the conventional skirt and blouse, but the larger number came adorned in baggy pajamas of dark color and large pattern.

The great weight the women carried on their heads was a marvel to us all. A hundred twenty pound sack of potatoes or a basket of wood, or beans, or household goods, balanced on the head by a ring of straw placed between the skull and basket,

"ME NO JAP! ME OKINAWAN!"

seemed no more to worry the women, as they moved along the highways in short mincing steps, than the yellow dust settling upon their clothing . . . possibly not as much.

Though the "non fraternizing with the native" order still stood, members of the 27th Battalion were hard put to live up to it, for they, like other Americans, liked to be friendly. Before the camp laundry was set up, some of the more daring Seabees made deals with native women whereby laundry would be done for two bars of soap, one as payment for the washing and one with which to wash the clothes. There were also many trinkets of more or less value, purchased by one means or another, from the natives. Usually, when soap was unavailable as a medium of exchange, cigarettes were substituted with equally good results.

However, inflationary trends affected Okinawa even as it does other parts of the world. Whereas, at first, a single cigarette would buy an old ten yen note of the Tokyo Ginko (bank) or a pair of rice straw sandals, when it came time for us to quit the island, the price had gone up to entire packs and cartons! And I heard about certain men, lonesome for feminine affection, at first, being able to buy that commodity for a package of chewing gum, but later had to raise the ante to a bar of laundry soap plus a pack of cigarettes! (This should be a warning to any people considering going off the deep end by inflation!)

Toward the end of July and during the first weeks of August, through the kindness of Headquarters Company Commander, Lieut. John F. Poulton, of Richmond, Va., I received permission, along with others, to explore the coast line about Ora Wan. Each Sunday afternoon, Bisenius, Schreckengaust, Kash and I would set out, usually by way of Ginusa. I took my kodak, my bug collecting kit, a few bottles for marine specimens, and my binoculars.

Right away we would attract the attention of the boys of the villages through which we passed. They gathered about us like

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flies, each wanting to know what we had enclosed in our pockets or parcels. My insect net especially interested the curious shaved heads. (All Okinawan boys had heads clipped close; the girls wore their hair cut long, often in "bang-like" cascades around their heads.) One lad, older than the rest, studied my net a moment, then made a wiggling motion low over the ground with one hand, followed up by the other in such an action there was no mistaking he was asking me if I used the net for catching fish.

I shook my head. Then in an effort to show him I used it to catch insects, I pointed to a leaf on a bush nearby, made a swoop with the net, and pretended I had captured something within. Right away the lad brightened up. He understood. And to show me he did, he placed a wrist on either of his shoulders and moved his hands as though flying.

Along the beach we met many natives, of all sizes and sex. Some were spearing fish, a few were using nets in the tide pools, apparently catching minnows impounded there by the retreating tide. But the greater number were either gathering drift wood or fuel, or busy in removing, with their fingers, tiny shellfish and crabs from holes in the tide-free coral. That these last mentioned were skilful in their search for *tabaymono* (food) was attested to by the near full cans the searchers carried.

Sometimes, younger women, coming toward us along the beach, their clothing wet and clinging to their forms like tights, would, in maidenly modesty, wade well out in the shallows to keep from meeting us face to face. Older women, sometimes bare to the waist, would, if their hands were not loaded, fold their arms across their breasts in modest gestures that seemed out of keeping with the surroundings and the time.

As with other beaches the world around, boys swarmed the water's edge, many as free of raiment as fish worms. When we were certain there were no official eyes to see us, nor official ears to hear, we often engaged these young monkeys in conversation. They were quick-witted fellows, and by signs and broken

"ME NO JAP! ME OKINAWAN!"

(shattered is the word) Japanese, we told them we were friends. Ice was usually broken, so to speak, by greeting them with "Kohnn-nee-chee wa," which, in the language of the enemy, meant "Goodday." Usually the lads so addressed would bow politely and respond, as they smiled broadly, with the same greeting.

The next thing we knew we had friends for the afternoon. Running about like puppies on a lark, the boys would follow along as we walked, bringing us all manner of interesting things they would pick up on the sands.

That the lads knew about the change in the military situation on their home island was made apparent in their seeming desire that their nationality be not mistake for Nipponese. More for the fun of hearing them reply than anything else, we would, on occasion, point to a boy and question, "You Jap? You Tojo?" Promptly, the answer would come, "Me no Jap; me Okinawan!" followed usually by a string of native words and sounds, the meaning of which we did not know, but ending with one or two "barnyard words" we *did* know, so that we were not left in doubt about the questioned lad's seriousness.

In the villages, two or more huts would be placed about a small court, the whole screened from neighbors by a hedge of hibiscus bushes. Often there would be walls of coral about groups of thatched roofed dwellings, placed there, we were told, as protection for the huts against the typhoons that annually play havoc on the island. While the streets and alleys of the towns were far from clean, the areas enclosed by hedge or coral, were kept free of trash as any one would want. Though the homes were furnitureless, the floors were clean and polished as one's dining room table.

All in all, the presence of the native Okinawans, while they complicated the overall military situation, since so many lived where it was necessary to bomb and shell the enemy, with consequent destruction of life and property, they made life far more interesting for those of us who had to spend time there.

Chapter 16.

OF BUGS AND PLANTS



SEMI-TROPIC OKINAWA, seen from the sea, appears covered with timber and, for that matter, has considerable forested areas, mostly of the Luchu pine, an evergreen tree that develops a wide, rounded top as it reaches maturity. But closer inspection of the ancient Ryukyus island reveals much of the land area given over to agriculture; rice paddies in all the watered lowland, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, sugar cane and soy beans on the higher soils.

Save for the rounded shape of the pines, the land resembles coastal areas of the United States, say Virginia, on the east, and northern California on the west. The soil is reddish yellow, and compact enough to support itself over small caves, many of which have been dug into the slopes and hillsides.

Since my mission on Okinawa was twofold, one of which, of course, was to help win the war, and the other to make as complete a collection of the island's Entomology as time and the enemy would permit. I looked askance at the big silver plane we saw from the ship, sweeping back and forth over the island, spraying DDT on tree and plant and embattled Jap. And, whether or not it was due to the effectiveness of the poison dropped from the skies, we found, when we went ashore, the Jap stronghold was less pest ridden than we had been led to believe.

Such a condition, through the rank and file, caused no Seabee to grieve. Nor, due to making for more comfortable living, though specimens were fewer and farther between, could I find it in my heart to complain. Nevertheless, I am convinced

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the poison made a great difference in number, especially among the mosquitos and flies.

During June and July, the butterflies, for which that part of the world is noted, were common. But many forms, especially certain of the papilios, were such high and speedy flyers that it was with considerable difficulty that I netted any at all. For one thing, the insects seemed to like to fly above the rankest underbrush, and for me to rush off over and through the shoulder high tangle was to invite trouble, not only from the tangled vegetation, unseen ravines, and short-tempered snakes, but from Jap snipers as well. So I contented myself in collecting about the fringes of the wood.

Many of the rarer butterflies, it seemed, had a habit of appearing when it was impossible to quit tasks of the moment to make a capture. More than once, while in formation, or assembled to listen while the Commander explained more fully the machinations to be expected from the enemy, out of the corner of my eye, I would see a perfect specimen of black-veined yellow Hestia come drifting near. At such times it required considerable will power, strengthened, no doubt, by knowledge of certain and swift punishment if I gave in to the impulse to give chase, that kept me from breaking ranks or sneaking away from an assembly. And, after all, the war had to be won first!

Dragonflies ("snake feeders" or "doctors" to many people) swarmed the island through all the months I was there. The most conspicuous was the ruby dragonfly, whose flaming self, red as blood, was to be seen on upland and low. The female was a demure, snuff colored insect, not nearly as showy as its brilliant mate, but both hawked for midges and mosquitos about our galley and mess hall. A slender green, black and white dragon fly, lover of shady places, often came into our tents. They were possessed of an insatiable appetite that seemed to draw no line among the hosts of smaller insects contemporary with it. More than once I saw it in canabalistic actions, dining

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on members of its own tribe! And, once one of these insects recaptured a specimen of butterfly for me! Here's how!

At the edge of a rice paddy, I made, one day, the capture of a small yellow butterfly commonly seen in such places. However, since I already had a good series of this species, I was so careless in looking into the net that the insect flew out and away. But its liberty was short lived. Hardly had it climbed a yard in the sunshine when I saw a shimmer of transparent wings as a dragonfly snatched the butterfly out of the air. Flying heavily with its prey, the fly went to a nearby tree trunk, and there proceeded to dine. Had I so desired, I could easily have retaken my specimen, but thought the hunter deserved its game after such courageous action, so did not disturb it.

It was not long until my "fame" as a bug collector spread through the battalion. Officers and men alike were helpful and kind in bringing me specimens, or telling me where interesting items could be found. Even the natives remembered me whenever they found snakes or lizards. Through the kindness of Dr. Howe, our battalion doctor, and the corpsmen, I was given preservative liquids as I needed them. Towards the end of my stay on the island, I was presented with a quantity of captured Japanese formalin, and in this potent poison, I sent my collection of Okinawan reptiles to the Museum at Washington, D. C.

The censor office actually crawled with live creatures brought in by men interested. Walking sticks, and praying mantis clung on the canvas or screens, and giant grasshoppers, sand crabs and lizards scurried about on the floor or hid away in the corners, a veritable zoo!

Not always did the citizens of my "zoo" get along well together. Usually they tried to avoid each other when they could. Sometimes, however, this was impossible, and when such a condition existed, they tried at first to bluff each other in getting out of the way, sometimes without success. One such bluff failed, and the failure resulted in an entomological bout that not only attracted a crowd of Seabees to my tent, but was so spectacular

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that colored motion pictures were taken of the battle.

It all came about because a female praying mantis (some call them "devil's horses,") green as a willow leaf, and plump with the seeds of her race's continuation, had taken up residence in my tent. For three days she had lived there, dining on the varied insect fare Bisenius, Williams and I brought to her, and, no doubt, considering the location, quite ideal for easy living. But all Edens, it seems, sooner or later, must have their serpents. And the serpent in this case was another mantis female, a "spittin' image" of the first. Chief L. C. Killion, of Amarillo, Texas, interested in my "bugs," brought the green insect, wrapped in his handkerchief, to the tent.

At the moment mantis No. 1, called by me, Madam Religiosa, from the name science gave her species, was in a position of rest on the electric light wire extension to my desk. Immediately she seemed to sense an intruder, and followed the insulated wire over to the center tent support. Wondering what would take place, I put the new mantis, called by Bisenius "Willie Gee," on the lower area of the tent pole in such a position that, in its upward climb, it could not help but meet the Madam.

As the two insects drew near each other, they both reared almost upright, moving slowly on their four walking legs, their modified pairs held tensely doubled back upon themselves. The Madam was the aggressor, and struck the first blow, a slashing down stroke across the newcomer's green-eyed head, her lace wings fluffing out as she struck. Before her opponent had time to even get settled for a return blow, the Madam gave her a right and a left that came near knocking her from the tent pole arena.

This seemed to make Willie Gee mad. Without more ado, she went in swinging, giving her adversary such a severe beating, first by the right and then by the left, that the Madam turned and retreated along the light wire, leaving the newcomer in possession of the entire pole. This was too much for the sporting instincts of the crowd that assembled, so the Madam's flight

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was blocked, and she forced again to face her enemy.

Now began a battle in earnest, each exchanging down slashing blows that were so savage their contacts could be heard by us who watched. There would be moments of much activity when the blows fairly rained down on each other. At other times the embattled insects would stand and glare at each other their bodies swelling and contracting in their breathing, their heads unmoving.

This went on during the space of about a half hour, during which time Walter Salmon, Battalion Photographer, took a series of shots of the fighting mantids. (But to this date, I have not heard if the pictures were good, since the negatives were left with the battalion in August when we "old timers" departed for the states.)

To a superficial examination, neither mantis appeared severely injured, if injured at all. But when the insects decided they had had enough of combat, they were never the same again. Whether it was due to a poison their anger had released into their blood streams, or their blows had been more deadly than they seemed, I do not know, but within three days both insects were dead, the Madam quitting her green life on the morning following the battle.

Though Okinawan mantids are no larger than the forms common in southern United States, apparently they are more voracious than their American kindred. While I never saw a praying mantis at home tackle an insect larger than a small dragon fly or a grasshopper, these Oriental relatives seem to bar no source of food, even it be several times their size and weight.

One afternoon at the north camp area, Warren Brannan, of Indian Gap, Texas, drew my attention to a disturbance in a pine tree near his tent. Upon investigation, I found a green praying mantis clinging to a large black locust (cicada), an insect three or four times the weight of its capturer. That the cicada disliked being eaten alive was evident in its fluttering wings and irregular stridulations. But it was to no avail, and an hour later

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I found the heavy "harvest fly" had been tossed on the ground, its whole upper thorax eaten away!

I doubt there was a man in the armed forces who visited Okinawa who did not take notice of the great black, white and yellow *Nephila* silk spiders that hung strong webs between the trees, or across the entrance to caves. The spinners of these nets were sometimes giant creatures, often in excess of six inches across their outstretched legs, and with bodies, sometimes two inches long, and as large around as a man's thumb. The males were so insignificant, by comparison, to their mates, that their bodies had less girth than the heads of their buxom consorts, and with the combined span of their outstretched legs less than the distance between the first and second joints of her fore legs. The males were so tiny, in fact, more than one Madam seemed to require two or more around to keep her company! One great web, in particular, kept three masculine hangerson, each occupying separate areas on the outer perimeter of the snare, while their "heart interest" occupied the center area, to my way of thinking, a most unsatisfactory arrangement!

Next to spiders, in point of interest, if not in number, were the centipedes, both the conventional short legged creatures and the giant long legged ones that looked, as Earl Catherwood, of Anthony, Kansas, said, like crosses between long legged spiders and common centipedes. The morning ritual, after arising, was to turn one's garments inside out, search carefully for spiders and centipedes along the seams, return to original condition and put on. A few mornings, due to a shortage of time, I failed to go through the little ceremony, the consequence of which was that I took a three inch centipede with me to morning chow, carrying the "reptile" a half mile in so doing.

There were snakes to be found on Okinawa, but their number was less than one would find in similar terrain in the United States. The long-fanged *habu* of Okinawa took the place of rattlesnakes in this country, though the Ryukyus reptile was without rattles, and smaller. Our copperhead had a counter-

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part in the *mamushi*, less poisonous but more common than the habu. In all the weeks I spent on Okinawa I found but 14 snakes of all species, seven of which I sent to the Museum at Washington, the others, for one reason or another, were unavailable for the trip.

Of particular interest, in the region between our camp and the bay, was the large number of the Cycad ferns that grew so abundantly. Of its fern-like fronds, the natives made many uses, both decorative and useful. Next in point of abundance was the Pandanus (screw pines) that tangled the shores of the bay. While they grew into trees ten or twelve feet tall, they reminded me of pineapple, both in the narrow leaves and the color and shape of the fruit. (I saw these same trees on Mog-Mog, Eniwetok and Guam. My plant book of the Pacific, tells me they are universal throughout the tropics.)

So far as my own observations go, the ornithology of Okinawa was more than skimpy. The slender jungle crows, during June, July and August, were often seen sailing about in the sky, or calling, with weak voices, from pinetree tops. Japanese wood pigeons were more common, and in the heat of the early mornings, could be heard cooing from the timber. I saw one small owl about the size of our screech owl, but its eyes were rusty red instead of the usual yellow. Of seabirds, there were but a few seen, but among them, not one gull!

Chapter 17.

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AS JULY HURRIED INTO HISTORY, and Okinawa's hunting season for Japs was about over, North Camp assumed something of the dimension and proportion it was drawn to have in the approved specifications. For weeks every available man was employed in camp construction in an effort to get as much done in the way of making it comfortable before the entire battalion was put to building houses for the displaced Okinawans, a job we had been assigned to do upon our arrival on the island.

After much delay and long and arduous hours of construction work, our great quonset hut galley-mess hall was finished. Its spacious floor area, 50 by 200 feet, was covered with concrete. Drop lights swung from the arched ceiling, and tables, with benches attached, were constructed for our eating pleasure and convenience.

The reefers were in the great hall now, and ice and ice cream became part and parcel of our hot weather menus. Two stateside steam dish washing machines took care of the dirty trays and cups. Large scale black and white drawings of torrid females and confused Seabees, by Garrity, adorned the walls. All in all, we were pretty well fixed.

The post office hut, too, was a place of much industry. Just inside the front door, the censors, Backus, Williams, Bisenius and I, sometimes assisted by Killian and Lodwick, read letters written by the men of the battalion. The Brightbill stamp and letter emporium through which all incoming and outgoing

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mail passed adjoined. Houle, Jay and Bosacker helped in this most appreciated work.

North Camp, now called Camp Tippins, for Chief B. A. Tippins who died shortly after we landed on Okinawa, was, at last, a place where we could live in something like comfort. And, methinks, we had earned it!

But there came a day, following some ugly rumors, wherein the Commander called us together and explained that, due to change of orders, the 27th Battalion would have to move again. At this information an audible groan swept over the crowd assembled. All this effort expended for nothing! All this material wasted! Yes, that was the case!

It was not long until wrecking crews began work on the warehouse and other camp buildings. The great quantities of lumber, machinery and other supplies were again loaded up and taken some fifteen miles down the bay to the site selected for our new camp. Tents were torn down, the nylon screening ripped and torn in the process, and much lumber, used in erecting the "tropic" tents, was destroyed.

That it was a blow to the members of the battalion, officers and men alike, no one denied. And while "orders were orders," and we had to follow them, yet it took the heart out of us in no small way to have to undo all that we had done. Likely the camp only cost a million or so dollars, and such trifles, in the light of war expenditures, were expendable.

There was one ray of hope to we who were the older men (in point of age) of the organization. Due to some changes in Navy procedure, it was decided to release all men 42 years and older who wished to be discharged. (There were exactly 42 men of that age and older in the 27th Battalion, all but two of this number asked to be released; I among them). Though the Commander was displeased that his "key men," as he called us, wished to leave his command, and did everything in his power to delay our departure, the time soon came when he could not help himself. Then he seemed to consider us as hot

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potatoes, and shook us loose just as soon as the paper work could be taken care of. One day we were bidding goodbye to the more fortunate ones who, for one reason or another, had been chosen for early departure, and the next few days found us, likewise, heading east. But this speedup, some how or other, pleased us very much.

Meanwhile the war was fast drawing to a close. Over the radio we heard President Truman announce the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan. Also we heard details of Russia's declaration of war upon the Japs. We felt certain we would soon hear squealing as though a pig had been caught in a gate. Nor were we mistaken, for soon the enemy began to ask for terms of surrender.

Rumors of one form or another began to wing about and through the Okinawan pines. One day there would be cheering and other means of saying the war was over, even to wild firing of machine guns for the type of men who seemed to require that means of expression. The next day would find a sober quiet had descended on the island that made even the sunlight heavy.

Thus it was that, on August 15, in the "chapel in the pines," where Chaplain Wagner conducted his services, the good man was thanking the Almighty for bringing the war to a close when the air raid signal sounded, and the PA system throughout the camp announced a "Red Condition," "All Lights Out!" The Chaplain hesitated a moment and continued, "We thank you, Lord, for bringing the war's end as close as it is."

We later found the air raid alarm was sounded when the white plane from Japan, enroute to Manila with the preliminary surrender party, passed along the shore of Okinawa. We were not taking chances of treachery, and the "alert" signal put every one on their toes, so to speak. But the enemy was sincere, and, as the world knows, went through the signing both at Manila and again on the battleship Missouri, in Tokyo Bay, thus bringing the war to an official end.

Chapter 18.

HOME FOR THIS SAILOR

ON THE MORNING OF August 19, Johnnie Steele, Arthur G. Sanderson, and I, set out to hitchhike our way to the old Jap airfield of Yontan, some thirty miles to the south. The purpose of our visit was to leave no strings unpulled in our efforts to fly back to the states. Before we had completed our trip, we had ridden in about every kind of vehicle except a chariot, had seen a lot of new country, and had a tentative, chance to fly home.

While we were at the field, George Brightbill, who left us two days before, finally was called to leave for Guam. His success gave us great hopes that we could do the same.

Thus it was, long before dawn, on the rainy morning of August 22, one day before the camp was to be completely wrecked, some 30 of us, including Bisenius, Steele, Sanderson, Knight and Michal, boarded two camp trucks for the first leg of our journey home. The last glimpse we had of Camp Timpins was the 27th Battalion sign, now with the word "Okinawa" filling in the space long left vacant.

Some of the men decided they would not try to fly, so went on down to NOB and waited there for a ship. For my part, I had decided I would fly if I had to hang about the airfields all fall.

We did not leave the flight office at Yontan except to go over to CASU F-11 to eat our meals and sleep the first night. Next morning we were back to the office before the day had well begun. Until noon we hung around, visiting the Japanese marble monument, erected by the enemy shortly before it left,

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and looking over the underground hangers that had housed Zeros but a scant few months before. After the noon meal we were told there might be a flight of C-54's from the army field of Kadena, and if we wanted to fly, we had better find a way to get there.

It was but a matter of a few moments until we piled into several jeeps, and were rolling northward. An hour later found us at the great field of Kadena, where more C-54's were lined up than I believed existed in the entire world. Here was stationed the great fleet by which, it had been planned, Japan was to be invaded.

Yes, a flight of empty Army transports were to return to Guam that night, but we were *Navy* personnel, and, at a previous time, the Navy had refused to haul Army men, so . . . we would not be carried! (Such petty dealings between the branches of the armed services filled us with disgust, especially since it was delaying our flight home!)

Sorrowfully we all went back to Yontan. But I sensed a rodent in the woodpile. I heard the Lieutenant Commander tell the Army major that he would go to see the higherups if need be. I decided to sleep on the benches in the airfield waiting room just in case the deal was straightened out in time to make the flight.

Sure enough, at ten, a telephone call came in. "If those Seabees want to fly with us, tell them to shag themselves over here at Kadena as quickly as possible." Before the telephone conversation was completed, I had my bags in a truck, and had hopped in by the time the others came swarming out. Back across the darkened land we bounced, sweeping around the sharper turns on two wheels, and racing up the long double rows of C-54's to the waiting planes, their motors already being warmed up.

In the roar of the engines and the beat of the disturbed breezes, the final muster list was called. In some manner Bisenius was not among those assembled with my group. (As

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later proved, he was assigned to a different plane,) Johnnie Steele, however, climbed aboard with ten others and myself. There was plenty of room for us all without crowding. Since the cabin had been made for 19 men, and we were but twelve, we had room to spread our blankets on the deck, stretch out and relax. Some of us turned down three wall seats and made our bunks there, I being one of these latter.

Hardly had the great silver ship cleared the runway and climbed into the darkness, when an army officer came back to inform us of blankets we could borrow if our own proved insufficient. I had brought along both my blankets, but they were packed in my duffel bag, so, seeing there were more than enough to go around, I availed myself of two additional.

What a glorious feeling to be speeding homeward at last! The fact that we were moving in excess of 200 miles an hour instead of the 12 or 15 that would have been ours on a Liberty ship, added to our satisfaction. I sat up looking out one of the plane's windows at the star-filled night until I grew weary, for it had been a wearing day, then snuggled down into my blankets to shut out the growing cold, and was soon asleep.

The temperature, at ten thousand feet, in an unheated cabin, drops quite low even in the tropics. Several times during the night I awoke to find myself chilled to the marrow, my blanket having slipped to the aisleway. Usually I looked out into the night a few minutes before wrapping myself again in blankets and slumber. But when I saw a gold glint to the sky in the direction of our flight, I decided the dawn was at hand, and the time for sleeping had passed.

I never again expect to be more thrilled than I was that August morning. We were flying above a golden overcast that supported columns of salmon jasper that, in turn, upheld the sky. The heat of the tropic sun soon melted away the carpet overcast, and left us in an area of gigantic saffron-hued woolpacks that dwarfed the plane to a toy. Far below trailed by a silver wake, an outbound ship was to be seen heading

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toward the west, possibly Okinawa, where four or five days later, it would reach the island we had quit but a few hours before. How glorious was Flight!

More or less intoxicated by the wonder and beauty to be seen about the plane, some might call it an esthetical jag, I began to believe Uncle Samuel was doing his nephew right well in permitting him to see all these meterological marvels, a sort of bonus payment for three long years of war. I was not aware, of course, that, sometime later, due to some careless help, he would mislay my service records, order me sent to a wrong camp, offer my wife \$25.00 reward to turn me in as a deserter and pen me up for 30 extra days! But, by all that's high and holy, that was what happened!

I felt the four great motors slacken their steady rhythm, and looked out and down on the tree-covered, sun-soaked island of Guam. In the next instant the big wing, over which I had been looking for some hours, dipped downward as the plane swept once around the island, and leveled off as we slipped over some cocoanut palms, as we came to a stop before the Army air terminal.

"This is as far as we go," announced an officer from the pilot's compartment. "You'll have to find some other way to get to the States."

We felt heat surge into the plane's cabin as the great side door was opened. Hastily, we removed the jackets and blankets about our shoulders, grabbed out gear and went down the ladder to the ground. We had hitched a ride thus far, and felt we could manage somehow to ride the air lanes the rest of the way. No slow ship for us!

But we reckoned not on the traffic jam brought about by the war's fast ending. Over at the Navy airport we found such a hustle and bustle we could scarcely get through the mob about the Commander's desk. There was nothing for us to do but be taken to NOB where we would be housed and fed until a ship was available for our trip eastward.

HOME FOR THIS SAILOR

For the next five days we were Guamites. At the Receiving Barracks we had a miniature 27th reunion. Brightbill and Salmon were still detained there, nor was it long until every man who had planned to fly from Okinawa, put in his appearance. Those who lost heart and waited for a ship, of course, did not show up while we were there.

During the five days we were at the Receiving Barracks we were not permitted to rove about the island. But we had seen twenty miles or so of the famous land body in the bus ride from the airport, noting the brightly clad native women and the grass thatch huts along the way. I further added to my knowledge of Guam entomology, by fashioning a "bug net from the old one I had used on Okinawa (and, by the way, it was the identical face net with which I seined the 3 spined sticklebacks from the tundra seepage lakes on Tanaga for William Beebe).

With the net I was able to collect about a dozen butterflies and other insects from the undergrowth just outside the fence that marked the edge of the camp area. I spent part of three sultry afternoons in this activity, enjoying myself immensely.

On the morning of the fifth day at Guam, I found my name on the outgoing list for the afternoon. I saw that Bisenius, who had been drafted to do some yeoman work, was not included. I hunted him up and, mockingly bid him goodbye, thinking surely he would later be included. Just to make chatter, I bet him one yen (ten cents) I would beat him to the States. He took me up. And later, after we had been discharged, he sent me the dime. He not only had been held at Guam, but also at Honolulu! And though we have contacted each other by letter since then, to date we have not seen each other.

Johnnie Steele, however, was with me, as was Chief Michal. And together, the three of us out of the 27th, on the Sea Star, crossed the Pacific, reaching San Francisco on the 14th of September. And there, again, we caught up with Salmon and Brightbill, who had proceeded us by but a few days.

READY ON THE LEFT

So ends another war! For the second time I have put aside war-making implements to return to my family and loved ones. Even as before, when I was handed my discharge, I said, "Never again!" This time, however, I have reasons to believe I speak the truth, for Father Time has not been idle, nor the years slow in passing. In a word, I believe, because of my age, if for nothing else, I will be turned down should I try again. And likely it will be the best for me if that happens.

Despite the misplaced Service Record, and the month of being penned up while those with whom I traveled were discharged and reunited with their families; despite the unjust accusation that I was a deserter, and a reward was offered for my apprehension; despite the rankles that were often mine in having to do a certain task in a certain way simply because it was the Navy way, (and tradition;) and despite the petty grievances that were mine during three years of war, I really have small reason to gripe. The fact that I was listed among the oldest men, in point of age, in the 45th Battalion, and second oldest in the 27th, did, I am certain, give me breaks that otherwise would not have been mine.

And whatever my net contribution to the war effort, whatever was done for me, I cannot say world travel was denied me. I had new experiences, made new friends, saw new sights, and gleaned much that, life permitting, will be the subject for my typewriter in the years that follow.

45TH BATTALION OFFICER MUSTER LIST

Commanders

C. G. Smallwood, Merick, N. Y.
J. P. Roulett, Flushing, N. Y.
R. G. Stuck, Wolcott, N. Y.

Lieut. Commander

J. W. Jones, Monroe, N. Y.

Lieutenants

J. F. Hasenkamp, Chattanooga, Tenn.
E. F. Shumaker, Edgewood, Pa.

J. T. Carpenter, Jackson Heights, N. Y.

J. E. Gillespie, Huntington, W. V.

J. P. Allen, New Martinsville, W. V.

E. H. Hutton, Norristown, Pa.

M. J. Mettle, Columbus, O.

W. B. Ricks, Effingham, Ill.

R. B. Manning, Portsmouth, O.

J. F. Golden, New York City, N. Y.

G. H. Caviezel, Pontiac, Ill.

C. S. Meeker, Jacksonville, Ill.

J. F. Martin, Los Angeles, Calif.

G. G. Hayden, Bronxville, N. Y.

G. J. Phillips, Kirkwood, Mo.

Lieutenant Junior Grade

W. H. Mitchell, Norwood, Conn.

R. R. Rising, Kansas City, Mo.

H. B. Gilroy, Dayton, N. D.

F. H. Simon, Neskowin, Ore.

F. Joyce, Auburnedale, Mass.

A. H. Klein, Brookline, Mass.

F. A. Wood, Jr., Conshohocken, Pa.

R. G. Nooe, Nashville, Tenn.

J. X. O'Connor, Manchester, N. H.

B. Taulbee, Bay City, Tex.

W. L. Thompson, Ellensburg, Wash.

Ensigns

C. N. Olsen, Youngstown, O.

R. T. Keeler, Cincinnati, O.

F. X. Ahern, Boston, Mass.

Chief Carpenter

J. C. Cook, Richmond, Va.

Chief Pharmacist

J. P. Reeves, Falmouth, Va.

Carpenters

C. R. Box, Kansas City, Mo.

J. P. Taheny, Chicago, Ill.

R. R. Lawson, Eveleth, Minn.

A. D. Nelson, Jerseyville, Ill.

W. C. Lang, Bay Side, L. I., N. Y.

E. P. Shultz, Tiffin, O.

COMPLETE MUSTER LIST OF 45TH NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION ARRANGED BY STATES

ALABAMA

Gilliam, W. F., Selma

Holley, N. C., Camden

Hollis, J. L., Eden

McMurry, P. M., Rogersville

Mitchel, S. E., Birmingham

Stricklen, F. A., Reform

ARIZONA

Ditmars, F. B., Willcox

CALIFORNIA

Anderson, C. L., Lomita

Beane, D. G., San Diego

Becker, A. H., Torrance

Bennett, D. H., San Bernardino

Boyd, H. E., Los Angeles

Bulger, Ivan, Martinez

Cole, M. E., Taft

Corley, B. M., San Francisco

De Gryse, J. A., San Francisco

Dubis, E. A., Oakland

Faris, J. B., Baldwin Park

Feldman, Otto H., San Diego

Geraghty, R. J., Glendale

Gillis, R. W., San Francisco

Hamilton, J. H., San Gabriel

Harris, P. M., Burbank

Heller, Geo. A., Los Angeles

Henley, B. S., Los Angeles

Hines, F. M., La Crescenta

Holling, E. B., San Francisco

Johnson, G. H., Long Beach

Kotta, R. D., San Francisco

Loucks, C. P., Livermore

Mays, T. A., Richmond

McDaniel, R. C., Los Angeles

McGowen, F. B., Sacramento

McKague, H. W., San Francisco

Nass, R. A., Los Angeles

Oltman, J. B., East Oakland

Reiners, B. J., Oakland

Rhodes, J. D., Santa Monica

Riley, C. S., Los Angeles

Robards, R. L., Los Angeles

Rubin, W. E., Los Angeles

Smith, A. F., San Diego

Stein, M. G., Los Angeles
Stewart, H. M., Los Angeles
Teget, B. O., San Pedro
Waggoner, J. R., Larkspur
Washburn, L. H., San Francisco
Worsfold, D. I., Los Angeles

COLORADO

Buseman, A. A., Colorado Springs
Richmeier, J., Denver

DELAWARE

Kirkpatrick, L. A., Wilmington

FLORIDA

Betrem, E. C., Atlantic Beach
Breeden, R. F., Daytona Beach
Burke, C., Miami
Burnham, J. B., Ft. Myers
Carey, W. H., Tarpon Springs
Davenport, J. R., Holly Hill
Every, W. R., Daytona Beach
Godwin, W. I., Miami
Griffis, G. M., W. Palm Beach
Hagerman, J. A., W. Palm Beach
Harr, W. W., W. Palm Beach
Hart, C. E., Tampa
Hart, Clovis, Tampa
Hedge, G. O., Jacksonville
Hedley, N. J., Winter Haven
Hogan, J. M., Jacksonville
Huggins, B. C., Jacksonville
Jennings, W. E., Port Richey
Kay, Herman M., Miami
Keene, H. R., Jacksonville
Kemp, G. S., Miami
Lampp, J. A., Englewood
Long, Geo. D., W. Palm Beach
Long, J. O., Jacksonville
Lopez, Elmo B., Jacksonville
McRoy, J. S., Winter Garden
Mock, Byron L., Ft. Meade
Morrison, H. E., Orlanda
Padgett, R. D., Jacksonville
Page, O. L., Wauchula
Pennington, C. K., Gainesville
Roberts, A. G., Jacksonville
Rumph, E. J., Lakeland
Smith, R. F., Jacksonville
Snow, W. L., Bradenton
Strickland, B. J., Grandin
Summerall, L. C., Miami
Summers, H. L., Miami
Taylor, J. S., Clewiston
Tillman, U. S., Miami
Tippins, B. A., Miami
Wallace, H. R., Bradenton
Wiggins, C. W., Englewood
Williams, J. S., Umatilla

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Alexander, W. G., Crawford
Almand, A. H., Atlanta
Barrow, R. L., Augusta
Baxter, W. H., Atlanta
Brown, Fred R., Atlanta
Brown, J. P., Decatur
Bryan, D. W., Jr., Atlanta
Butler, A. P., Byronville
Capes, E. M., Porterdales
Carson, L. N., Atlanta
Carter, O. A., Berlin
Cochran, F. G., Atlanta
Falna, Otis L., Columbus
Finger, V. F., Albany
Frazier, J. J., East Point
Freeman, U. F., Lawrenceville
Gilbert, John W., Columbus
Granger, G. G., Columbus
Haywood, A. W., Macon
Holston, C. L., Macon
Hurst, Ezra H., Cairo
Jeffares, Geo. F., Smyrna
Jones, A. L., Jasper
Joyner, F. L., Atlanta
Kicklighter, W. T., Claxton
King, G. G., Thomaston
LaBoon, J. S., Athens
Landrum, C. M., Hapeville
Ledford, E. B., Canton
Malone, T. L., Monticello
Mitchel, L. J., Atlanta
Neal, J. T., Jr., Atlanta
O'Dillon, W. R., Madison
Ouzts, Bennie D., Macon
Ridgeway, B., Macon
Saye, D. D., Athens
Smith, Frank, Thomaston
Stallings, R. H., Jr., Smyrna
Strickland, C. Q., Atlanta
Wall, A. J., Shellman
West, C. B., Atlanta
Wilson, Holt, Columbus
Wilson, Noah H., Hahira
Womac, Virgil, Dallas

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Arneson, A. L., Couer d' Alene

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Burns, G. R., Harvey
 Butts, H. J., Chicago
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 Ikenberry, E. E., Perry
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 Johnson, J. W., Ringstead
 Kaplan, Dave, Sioux City
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 Keller, D. J., Des Moines
 Kern, P. J., Des Moines
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 Lackey, R. G., Guthrie Center
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 Leek, F. L., Spirit Lake
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 Smith, R. C., Waukee
 Stevens, G. L., Perry
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 Willey, C. O., Leon
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 Wold, A. H., Rolfe

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 Elam, Ted, Neodesha
 Holland, P. E., Kinsley
 Leonard, M. G., Humbolt
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 Newton, E. J., Topeka
 Sample, L. E., Mankato

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 Blatz, T. L., Louisville
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 Collins, C. S., Louisville
 Creager, L. K., Lexington
 Davis, R. N., Louisville
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 Duffy, R. E., Lexington
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 Hawkins, G., Georgetown
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 Isaacs, W. R., Louisville
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 Kuebler, A. J., Louisville
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 Lvtle, K. J., Covington
 Martin, S. D., Florence
 Murphy, F. R., Owensboro
 Musick, Otis, Emma
 Nichols, C. A., Louisville
 Rock, A. L., Louisville
 Shirley, J. F., Louisville
 Shryock, R. V., Shelbyville
 Sorg, F. J., Louisville
 Tate, W. L., Louisville
 Wagner, S. D., Owensboro
 Wulf, Anthony, Ludlow.

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Bowen, E. E., Spencer
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Metoyer, Leo, Alexandria
Miller, Jesse, Alexandria

MAINE

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Manuel, F. E., Beltsville
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McLean, L. I., Lexington
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McNulty, R. J., Lynne
Munise, J. E., Taunton
Zampell, Wm., Medford

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Baker, O. R., Rochester
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Bonner, Robt. C., Pontiac
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Brown, W. T., Detroit
Bucholtz, R. T., Jackson
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Constant, Frank, Detroit
Costello, W. P., Detroit
Couture, Phillip A., Bay City

Couture, Robt. P., Bay City
Cross, Chas. M., Walled Lake
Dinger, E. W., Royal Oak
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Fitzgerald, J. A., Detroit
Gailey, H. J., Highland Park
Gaynes, L. M., Detroit
Gillis, J. F., Grand Rapids
Gillow, O. E., Detroit
Groh, E. C., Detroit
Hadden, E. J., Lake Orion
Hauser, H. E., Trenton
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Hill, F. F., Pontiac
Hittle, G. R., Byron
Hurst, E. T., Laingsburg
Jansen, R. J., Detroit
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Johnson, R. H., Detroit
Joseph, Everett, Pontiac
Kaitschuck, W. M., Detroit
King, E. F., Detroit
Kiss, Steve L., Detroit
Korby, R. C., Detroit
Korte, P. W., Dearborn
Korver, J. A., Battle Creek
Kramer, E. D., Grosse Pointe
Kruszewski, M. H., Detroit
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Kuzawa, Marion, Grand Rapids
Labadie, E. P., Turner
Lewis, E. J., Warren
Lord, Luther C., Birmingham
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Lucas, M. A., Detroit
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Martin, J. S., Shelbyville
Mattson, T. R., Munising
McCauley, H. J., Wyandotte
McDonald, R. J., Grand Rapids
McDonald, R. T., E. Detroit
McDougal, C. K., Saginaw
McGhan, M. J., Charlevoix
Meldrum, G. E., Algonac
Milanowski, J., Detroit
Miller, R. H., Monroe
Milne, W. C., Lansing
Miskewitz, E. J., Grand Rapids
Mundie, R. S., Grosse Pointe
Neal, W. F., Bay City
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Omans, B. G., Grand Rapids
Perdue, C. M., Melvindale
Petrie, P. J., Detroit
Philipp, H. L., Flint
Priest, Frank J., Saginaw

Ross, K. L., Grand Rapids
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Seagart, G. L., Adrian
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Starr, J. A., Detroit
Still, L. Z., Adrian
Suydam, K. L., Adrian
Trapp, R. L., Hawks
Tuharsky, J. H., Detroit
Wagner, J. M., Dearborn
Watson, J. H., Detroit
Weaver, J. H., Flint
Whitaker, A. D., Pontiac
Whitaker, R. C., Lansing
Wilbur, H. C., Coldwater
Williams, W. M., Ingalls
Wilson, E. W., Detroit
Woods, L. A., Jackson
Zarkowski, C., Detroit

MINNESOTA

Algren, R. C., St. Paul
Birt, Wesley, St. Paul
Bluml, L. J., Minneapolis
Bruce, W. S., St. Paul
Carlson, S. E., Bird Island
Carlson, Wm., Minneapolis
Funk, M. L., Luverne
Garrity, R. G., Minneapolis
Kenny, R. J., St. Paul
Knaeble, R. B., Minneapolis
Leines, M. E., Minneapolis
Lenmark, Ivar, St. Louis Park
Leskets, John, Minneapolis
Lucas, P. R., St. Cloud
Peterson, A. O., Kimbal
Steuart, F. R., Henning

MISSISSIPPI

Pernell, Johnie, Itta Bena
Piazza, D. N., Meridian

MISSOURI

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Ascherman, E. R., St. Louis
Baur, F. W., Pilot Grave
Billingsly, DeWitt, St. Louis
Blase, J. W., St. Louis
Bolte, L. J., St. Louis
Bresina, G. F., Kansas City
Brown, L. E., Kansas City
Bryan, Robt. R., Bonne Terre
Burns, F. E., St. Louis
Chalpin, Geo., St. Louis
Chappell, R. S., Cape Girardeau
Coshow, Edwin, St. Louis
Cummings, A. D., Butler
Cummings, S. D., Kansas City

Day, E. J., Crystal City
Donahue, Ralph J., Kansas City
Dorman, H. W., Popular Bluff
Ehredt, B. C., St. Louis
Faour, Abraham, St. Louis
Flaughter, G. B., Robertson
Freeling, Geo. H., Kansas City
Fuller, D. E., Kansas City
Griffith, H. E., Boonville
Hannsz, G. E., Norborne
Heidrich, T. B., Jefferson City
Hoefelkamp, C. H., St. Louis
Holmberg, Carl J., Brunswick
Johnson, J. E., Holcomb
Keese, I. N., Purcell
Kennedy, C. M., Chillicothe
Lang, Chas. A., St. Louis
Lemasters, L. S., Kansas City
Lindsey, K. Q., Kansas City
Lvnn, Paul L., Normandy
McMullin, W. B., Kansas City
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Moranville, E. J., Lemay
Mullich, O. L., Kirkwood
Murphy, C. W., St. Louis
Nichols, M. J., Ashland
O'Neill, F. J., St. Louis
Rawlins, C. E., Hale
Rose, Ralph E., Maplewood
Rountree, N. M., Joplin
Scanland, W. E., Mineola
Shumate, S. H., Memphis
Singley, R. E., Green City
Stewart, J. M., Springfield
Stricker, H. J., James
Wagner, E. M., Houston
Wagner, Ernest, Houston
Wells, M. B., Warrensburg
Williamson, F. J., St. Louis
Wright, G. D., Jackson

MONTANA

Jacobson, L. S., Hamilton
Ness, Elmer, Great Falls

NEBRASKA

Baburek, Robt., B., Omaha
Bruce, C. G., Meade
Crouch, A. H., Broken Bow
Culver, W. J., Omaha
Drake, J. J., Carroll
Foot, Geo. B., Omaha
Fravel, A. F., Lexington
Hanzek, M. G., Omaha
Magner, J. L., Omaha
Mertens, H. F., Omaha
Milobar, M. J., Omaha

Musser, S. J., Tryon
Pieper, H. C., Blair

NEW JERSEY

Blackman, Irving, Bergenfield
Eaton, A. H., Spotswood
McGlynn, J. P., Bayonne
Meehan, R. E., Union City
Mupo, A. R., New Brunswick
Nardone, J. J., Paterson
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NEW MEXICO

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Cassady, G. R., Farmington

NEW YORK

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Hartley, J. E., Glen Cove
Linton, G. E., Hartsdale
Mazzarone, A., Long Island City
McAskill, R. A., Syracuse
McCarty, B. R., New York City
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McKnight, T. J., Bronx
McLeod, A. R., Brooklyn
Meirs, J. P., Bronx
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Mocarski, W. J., Brooklyn
Moon, R. A., Bronx
Murtagh, C. M., New York City
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Nocera, R. C., Buffalo
Seward, J. W., S. Ozone Park

NORTH CAROLINA

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Batchelor, J., Farmville
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Boring, F. M., Smithfield
Byram, W. K., Charlotte
Caldwell, B. K., Maiden
Chappell, E. W., Burlington
Childers, H. W., Canton
Council, L. F., Rocky Mount
Crawford, N. P., Ahaskie
Crowe, S., Cherokee
Davis, R. G., Beulaville
Evans, Omer, Bryson
Everhardt, G. R., Jr., Spencer
Griffin, J. E., Sanford
Harrison, J. H., Salisbury
Jones, J. C., Mocksville
Lawrence, Bill, Burlington
Maney, S. K., Cherokee
McDuffie, J. W., Sanford

Minton, F. B., Aulander
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Palmer, W. O., Hayesville
Pearson, J. E., Morgantown
Pyler, H. H., Salisbury
Reynolds, F. T., Lewisville
Robinson, H. A., Plymouth
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NORTH DAKOTA

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De Foe, R. C., Dickenson
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Maus, J. H., Golsva
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Roth, V. J., Drake
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OHIO

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Bagnoli, A. J., Youngstown
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Barthelmeh, A. F., Canton
Beach, R. E., Middleport
Becker, Carl, Jr., Cincinnati
Beckerucci, L. L., Canton
Bleichschmid, S. J., Cleveland
Bollard, J. R., Warren
Boncella, S. M., Cleveland
Brauchler, W. F., Canton
Broomhall, W. E., Barnesville
Burcewicz, A. F., Toledo
Burke, E. H., Youngstown
Cartwright, F. E., Bucyrus
Chevalier, C. M., Gallopoleis
Clark, J. L., Middletown
Claycomb, T. H., Salem
Cochran, A. F., Massillon
Collins, G. T., Dayton
Crawford, G. C., Georgetown
Cunningham, E. H., Painesville
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 Hoffman, L. W., Toledo
 Hoobler, W. M., Waynesburg
 Hoskins, F. M., Cuba
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 Hugo, Fred, Dayton
 Hunt, T. S., Akron
 Hut, Paul, Dayton
 Iori, Enrico, Cincinnati
 Jackson, H. L., Springfield
 Jamison, W. R., Geneva
 Johnson, R. L., Toledo
 Jones, K. V., Martin's Ferry
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 Weaver, L. E., Garfield Heights
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 Whalen, E. J., Springfield
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 Wonders, J. W., Leavittsburg
 Wortman, J. S., Columbus

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 Shepherd, Ray, Blanchard

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 Wheeler, K. T., Salem
 Woodworth, D. B., Portland

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Holotanko, John, Somerset Co.
Link, Geo. M., Collingsdale
Murphy, F. S., Pitcairn
Perry, L. A., Osceola
Schneider, F. A., McKees Rocks Ter.
Simon, F. E., Erie
Smith, C. W., Widroon
Winner, W. T., Bellevue
Wood, W. C., Versailles

RHODE ISLAND

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Laffan, E. M., Manville

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Gardner, J. L., Lancaster
Gordon, E. H., Clover
Jeter, W. G., Carlisle
Lipscomb, J. W., Greenville
Milligan, Robt., Charleston
Outlaw, C. C., Camdem
Pierce, W. F., Cheraw
Pontsler, C. E., Chapel Hill

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Goosen, F. J., Marion
Kotti, G. H., Lead
Kyle, L. M., Elk Point
Olsen, L. P., Viborg
Pexa, Leo, Rapid City
Sanders, D. K., Pierre

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Jones, W. L., Bemis
King, C. E., Chatanooga

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Forrest, D. E., Gladewater
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Hamilton, H. L., Kilgore
Hicks, W. B., Houston
Hill, G. T., Corpus Christi
Hull, H. C., San Antonio
Jeffery, P. N., Beaumont

Lanning, C. F., San Antonio
Matthaei, H. W., Houston
Paulson, G. M., Houston
Phillips, Wm., San Antonio
Pinkerton, E. R., Harlinger
Rayford, T. E., Tyler
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Swearingen, G. E., Maydelle
Thomas, L. C., Ranger

UTAH

Jeffs, Leland E., Salt Lake City
Rukavina, Michael, Ogden

VERMONT

Tkaczyk, Stephen, Brattleboro

VIRGINIA

Arvin, L. E., Meherrin
Brown, C. S., Altavista
Brown, Eric D., Culpeper
Cassada, W. D., Richmond
Clifton, J. A., Norfolk
Franklin, A. C., Staunton
French, S. E., Richmond
Hanes, J. G., Clifton Forge
Henry, Patrick B., Richmond
Houck, Don L., Fredericksburg
Jenkins, C. R., Richmond
Johnson, A. S., Portsmouth
Keiger, T. F., Richmond
Paxten, C. R., Roanoke
Pleasants, R. C., Waynesboro
Shuster, J. P., Alexandria
Stone, H. B., Fredericksburg
Surratt, H. L., Clintwood
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Wakefield, H. S., Richmond
Weston, E. J., Hopewell

WASHINGTON

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Cadwell, C. G., Seattle
Farrar, B. L., Vancouver
Guild, W. D., Vader
Hubby, C. E., Bellingham
Julian, B. R., Peshastin
McCafferty, C. O., Spokane
Newell, R. B., Port Angeles
Polson, C. M., Seattle
Stinson, W. N., Tacoma

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Cravens, J. E.
Dixon, Lester B.

Fields, Wm. E.
 Fisher, L. R.
 Heflin, Robt. E.
 Helmer, W. J.
 Hunter, C. E.
 Koutsos, G. J.
 Ludwig, C. P.
 Owens, W. P.
 Pennington, S. F.
 Schimmel, A. A.
 Wood, A. C.

WEST VIRGINIA

Angel, Abraham, Huntington
 Dorn, Benj., Huntington
 Duffield, Ernest, Parkersburg
 Farnsworth, J. C., Parkersburg
 Fisher, Art, Vienna
 Garner, F. B., Fairmount
 Gillespie, W. E., Sutton
 Grimm, L. W., Martinsburg
 Harpold, R. L., Charleston
 Knapp, J. F., West Columbia
 Knox, D. G., Fairmount
 Llanaza, J. A., Clarksburg
 Martin, W. D., Morgantown
 McCoy, H. E., Vienna
 Moon, L. M., Bayard
 Nash, V. L., Huntington
 Newman, T. R., Hogsert
 Zanolli, J. W., Wheeling

WISCONSIN

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 Cavanaugh, T. E., Wauwatosa
 Chimka, M. B., Cudahy

Dooney, F. B., Elroy
 Erdman, T. A., Milwaukee
 Erich, H. H., Wauwatosa
 Field, M. B., Eau Clair
 Goll, F. C., Milwaukee
 Habel, C. R., West Bend
 Haevers, F. C., Casco
 Hager, W. L., Oshkosh
 Halley, M. A., Beloit
 Heilman, R. E., Milwaukee
 Hill, Andrew, Milwaukee
 Kane, H. E., Suring
 Keiffer, H. J., Racine
 Kessen, F. J., Sturgeon Bay
 Kofler, L. B., Milwaukee
 Lambeseder, J. J., Milwaukee
 Liddle, R. O., Milwaukee
 McDermott, J. W., Stoughton
 McKee, Tom H., Luck
 Metzler, David, Milwaukee
 Nelson, H. W., Cudahy
 Pedley, H. E., Kenosha
 Raue, W. J., Watertown
 Resar, W. J., Racine
 Roesler, A. C., Milwaukee
 Rooney, W. R., Milwaukee
 Sanfilippo, P., Milwaukee
 Schmit, H. H., Milwaukee
 Shay, W. H., La Crosse
 Trader, E. J., Milwaukee
 Volkman, F. R., Appleton
 Wickert, F. P., West Bend

CANADA

Edwards, C. M., Windsor, Ont.

27TH BATTALION (SECOND TOUR) OFFICER MUSTER LIST

Willard G. Triest, New York City, N. Y.
 William F. E., Cabaniss, Augusta, Ga.
 John F. Poulton, Richmond, Va.
 Donnell C. Howe, Chicago, Ill.
 Arnold G. Towle, Leominster, Mass.
 Davis M. Perkins, Troutdale, Ore.
 Grattan C. Colvin, Charlottesville, Va.
 Walter R. Hartmann, New York, N. Y.
 Dean C. Works, San Mateo, Calif.
 C. E. Loebe, Oakland, Calif.
 D. B. Hill, Little Rock, Ark.
 John L. Hunter, San Francisco, Calif.
 Frank E. Carpenter, Twin Falls, Idaho
 Hyman Berger, Denver, Colo.
 Robert L. Krill, Milwaukee, Wis.
 Joseph H. Wagner, Jackson, Mo.
 Edward A. Vowinkle, New Doep,
 Staten Island, N. Y.
 T. L. Snitzer, Beverly Hills, Calif.
 Donald A. Julius, Tiffin, O.
 Arthur L. Schwenneker, Dean, Mont.
 Leonard P. Clemo, Hayward, Calif.
 Leonard L. Byars, Tulsa, Okla.
 John S. Verdugo, Laguna Beach, Calif.
 Howard W. Swan, Kansas City, Kans.

SECOND TOUR MUSTER

27th Naval Construction Battalion

Adams, R. J., Oklahoma City, Okla.; Accord, C. E., Detroit, Mich.; Adair, J. E., Brooklyn, N. Y.; Adamski, M. G., Pottstown, Penna.; Adamson, S. H., Lagrange, Ga.; Adriance, C. H., Portland, Me.; Aikens, A. T., Decatur, Ga.; Ajello, F. G., New York, N. Y.; Alberts, C. W., Bronte, Tex.; Aldrich, D. E.; Flint, Mich.; Aldrich, G. S., Houston, Tex.; Aldrich, P. R., Benton Harbor, Mich.; Allen, C. D., Ft. Worth, Tex.; Allen, Jimmy C., Trenton, Tenn.; Allen, R. R., Oswego, Kans.; Amidon, H. W., Syracuse, N. Y.; Anderson, J. O., Dalton, Minn.; Anderson, D. K., Bushnell, Ill.; Anderson, P. H., Minneapolis, Minn.; Anderson, D. M., Bogota, Tex.; Aranda, A. B., Thompson, N.D.; Archambeault, G. J., Brooklyn, N. Y.; Arney, J. T., Tulsa, Okla.; Asher, A. P., Kansas City, Kans.; Ashley, A. G., Perry, Okla.; Ashworth, J. A., Union Point, Ga.; Atkins, E. J., Trenton, N. J.; Autry, G. R., Wilmington, N. C.; Ayres, J. H. Jr., Pampa, Tex.

Backman, V. R., Ashland, Nebr.; Backes, E. C., New Orleans, La.; Badger, H. R., Okobojo, S. D.; Bailey, E., McDowell, W.V.; Bailey, W. J., Savanna, Ill.; Baker, C. W., Kilgore, Tex.; Baker, K. W., Hepler, Kans.; Ballew, M., Lonoir City, Tenn.; Ballou, W. P. Jr., Liberty, Mo.; Barrett, E. R. Jr., Hovaker, Va.; Bosch, R. O., Pass Christian, Miss.; Bass, R., Meridian, Miss.; Bass, R., Moras, Ga.; Basso, C. A., Torrington, Conn.; Bates, C. E., Dallas, Tex.; Baumann, W. B., Mt. Pleasant, Penna.; Baumann, L. R., Belle Fourche, S.D.; Bays, J. A., Mulkeytown, Ill.; Beheiter, L. P., Washington, Mo.; Belair, R. R., Biddleford, Me.; Bell, A. J., San Francisco, Calif.; Bell, A. M., Lava Hot Springs, Idaho; Bell, E. W., El Reno, Okla.; Bellich, S., Daisytown, Penna.; Bendel, D. O., Pittsburg, Penna.; Bender, H. G., Portland, Ore.; Bennett, R. A., Amber, Okla.; Bennett, C. A., Fitch, Tex.; Bennight, H. O., Livingston, Calif.; Benson, J. W., Whitman, Mass.; Berg, E. F., Milwaukee, Wis.; Berkovitz, M. B., Nashville, Tenn.

Berry, R. H., Marietta, Tex.; Bessey, H. C., Hubbard, Ore.; Bessoni, R. W., New Britain, Conn.; Bilbrey, J. K., Cookeville, Tenn.; Bilman, R. E., Waco, Tex.; Bilton, L. T., Cleburne, Tex.; Bisenius, G. N., Los Angeles, Calif.; Bittinger, J. C., Chambersburg, Penna.; Bivins, I. L., Muskogee, Okla.; Black, L. D., Loudon, Tenn.; Black, R. T., Marquette, Mich.; Blackwell, H. A., Tulsa, Okla.; Blair, E. E., Fanshawe, Okla.; Blair, Emery C., Yuma, Ariz.; Blakley, K. V., St. Joseph, Mo.; Bledsoe, B. L., Trenton, Tenn.; Blees, M., Malvern, Ark.; Boatman, D. W., Corpus Christi, Tex.; Boblitz, C. C., Baltimore, Md.; Bohannon, M. A., Coffeyville, Kans.; Boleware, R. E. Jr., Brewton, Ala.; Bollier, J. E. Jr., Hailton, Tex.; Bomar, W. V. Jr., Silverton, Tex.; Bondurant, A. M. Jr., Houston, Tex.; Bonomi, A. A., Petaluma, Calif.; Borgeson, A. L., Craigmont, Idaho; Bosacker, L. A., Albert Lea, Minn.; Boswell, D. W., East Alton, Ill.

Botts, H. R., Latrobe, Penna.; Bourland, L. S., Ada, Okla.; Bowman, C. D., Bogue Chito, Miss.; Boyd, B. D., Speed, Kans.; Bozeman, R. C., Winter Haven, Fla.; Bradford, W. W., Dry Creek, W.Va.; Bradley, G. R., Kinston, Ala.; Brandon, L. A., Cookeville, Tenn.; Branstrop, W. C., St. Paul, Minn.; Brannon, W. G., Indian Gap, Tex.; Braswell, H. W., New Boston, Tex.; Braun, Leo B., Winnetka, Ill.; Braun, Leroy B., Winnetka, Ill.; Brewer, J. R., Fortuna, Calif.; Brewer, L. G., Albuquerque, N.M.; Briggs, A. L., West Jordan, Utah; Brightbill, G. F., Gloucester City, N.J.; Briscoe, C. G., Kilgore, Tex.; Brixey, T. L., Hulbert, Okla.; Broadwell, B. H., Newport, Va.; Broer, C. E., Munday, Tex.; Bromley, C. J., Rosebud, Mont.; Brooks, G. E., Delta, Colo.; Brown, Alex., Ventura, Calif.; Brown, C. E., Mona, N.Y.; Brown, E. J., Columbus, O.; Brown, Ed. J., Phila., Penna.; Brown, Ira W., Birmingham, Ala.; Brown, M. J. Jr., Nashville, Tenn.; Brown, R. L., Viola, Wis.; Brown, P. E., Trussville, Ala.; Browning, J. M., Charleston, W.V.; Browning, H. L., Ackerman, Miss.; Broxson, L. F., Bellwood, Ala.; Bruce, M. J., Junction City, Kans.; Bryant, W. E., Saline, Tex.; Bucci, A. T., Johnson, R.I.; Bucci, E. J., Youngstown, O.; Buck, J. D., Decatur, Tex.;

Buckner, F., Chillicothe, Mo.; Buckner, H., Tulsa, Okla.; Buell, J. A., Newtonville, Mass.; Bundt, J. W., Mt. Morris, Mich.; Burchfield, C. P. Jr., Greenville, Miss.; Burden, F. W. Jr., Owensboro, Ky.; Burgdoff, F. O., Syracuse, N.Y.; Burgess, J. E., Princeton, W.V.; Burke, J. V., Rosedale, Md.; Burks, V. W., Counce, Tenn.; Burnett, W. E., Atmore, Ala.; Burr, H. Jr., Boontown, N.J.; Burris, R. L., Houston, Tex.; Butler, W. E., Allen, Okla.; Butterworth, W. N., Okla. City, Okla.; Buttler, A. W., Corpus Christi, Tex.; Buzik, W. E., Roanoke, Va.; Byrd, J. B., Laural, Miss.;

Cabral, A. N., Middleboro, Mass.; Caffall, W. R., Bandera, Tex.; Cain, M., Wallace, N.C.; Caldwell, C. E., Portland, Ore.; Cambeses, R., Gary, Ind.; Camden, M. F. Jr., Omaha, Nebr.; Campana, C. A., Warren, O.; Campanelli, A. C., Chicago, Ill.; Campbell, W. M., Linden, N.J.; Campbell, H. G., Harrison, Ark.; Canada, H. M., Clover, Va.; Canova, A., Petaluma, Calif.; Cantrell, R. L., Knoxville, Tenn.; Cantrell, F. R. Jr., McMinnville, Tenn.; Cantwell, A. Jr., St. Marys, W.V.; Capdepon, A. B., Lakeshore, Miss.; Capps, J. W., Banner, Okla.; Carlisle, A. B., Jackson, Miss.; Carman, E., Lubbock, Tex.; Carpenter, J. D., Jacksonville, Fla.; Carpenter, M. L., Attleboro, Mass.; Carter, O. H., Decatur, Ill.; Cashion, G., Hamilton, Ala.; Caskey, G. M., Iron Station, N.C.; Caskey, T. L., Muskogee, Okla.; Castello, M. D., Bronx, N.Y.;

Castle, R., Lowmansville, Ky.; Catherwood, E. A., Anthony, Kans.; Coughorn, R. H., Guymon, Okla.; Chaboya, A. B., San Francisco, Calif.; Chamberlain, G. B., Los Angeles, Calif.; Chambers, I. W., Pasadena, Calif.; Chapman, W. C., Ashland, Va.; Chase, C. E., Montrose, Mich.; Chatelain, R. E., Lafayette, La.; Cheadle, E. B., Tulsa, Okla.; Chenault, J., Prackettville, Tex.; Chiantella, J. M., New Orleans, La.; Chilsom, C. F., Alder, Mich.; Chimento, C., Harvey, La.; Chontos, E., Bethlehem, Penna.; Church, J. E., Trumann, Ark.; Clark, J. F., Rockwood, Tenn.; Clements, V. C., Wenatchee, Wash.;

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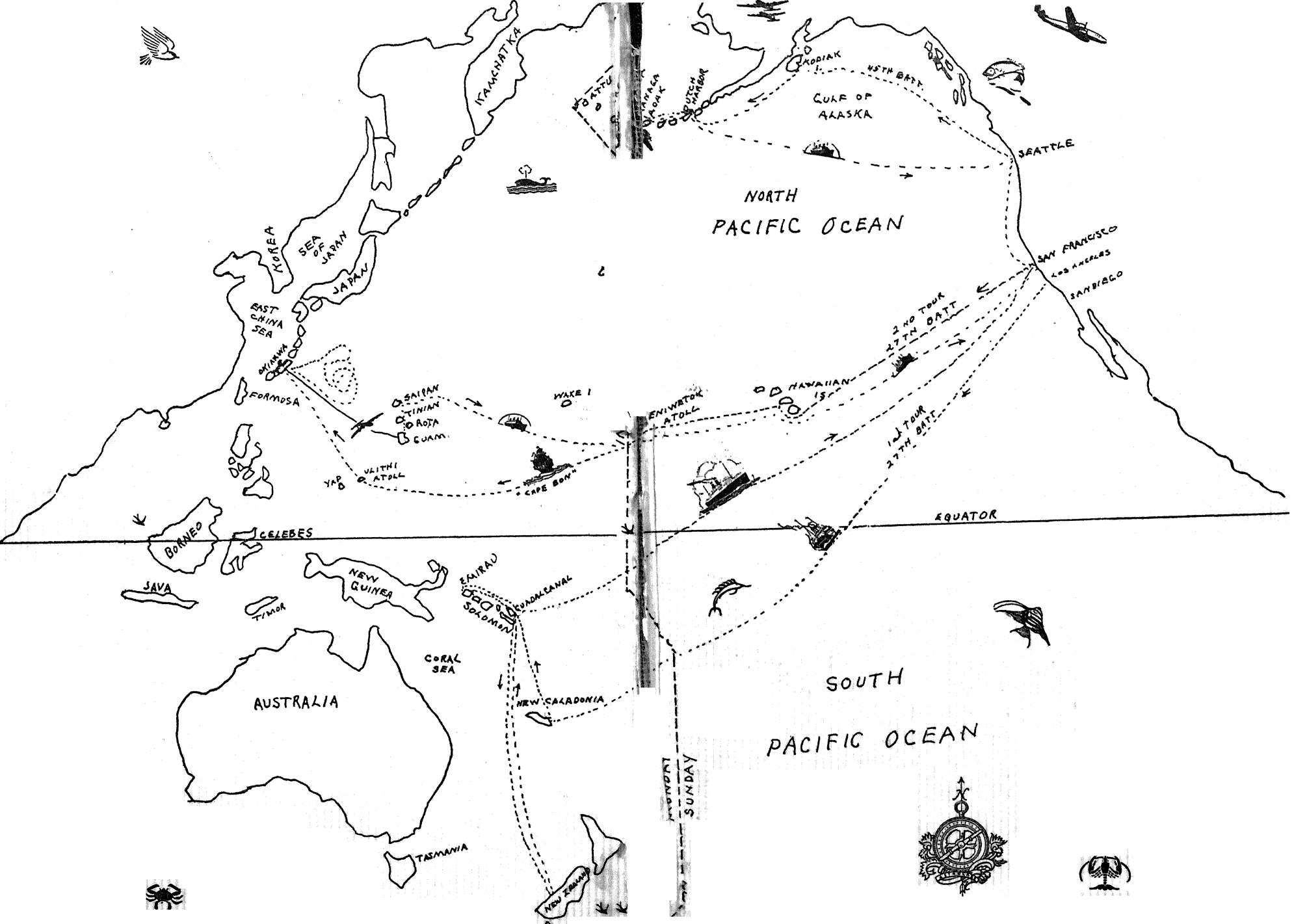
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